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FOUNDLING

OF

BELGRADE:

A TRANSLATION FROM THE FRENCH.

BY W. JENNINGS.

" Sit Medea ferox invictaque, flebilis Ino,
Perfidus Ixion, Io vago, tristis Orestes."

HORAT. *de arte poetica.*

NEW-YORK:

PRINTED & PUBLISHED BY D. LONGWORTH,
At the Shakspeare-Gallery,
NO. 11, PARK.

1808.

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THE

FOUNDLING

OF

BELGRADE.

CHAPTER I.

"VILLAIN!" exclaimed a voice from behind, while a rapier passed under the arm of Alfonso. Bleak and stormy was the night; and, the alternate brightness, and total absence of the moon, served but to perplex the way-lost traveller on the heath.

Alfonso had discovered the intricacy in which he was involved; but he had no alternative. Revolving in his mind the singular occurrences of the past, inadvertently, he quitted the road he was pursuing; and, when too late to retrace his steps, had plunged into a common equally dreary and unfrequented. His past life had been chequered by incidents of no ordinary cast; and he was become used to difficulties insurmountable by the common run of individuals. Eager to reach the appointed spot where should be unfolded, perhaps, the mystery of his birth and the origin of the persecution which had pursued him for years is an apology, sufficient, for his inquietude on the fir

discovery of his embarrassment ; but he soon regained the customary temper of his mind, and without abandoning himself to despondency he at once resolved to proceed, with slow and cautious steps, in the hope of meeting with some hamlet in which to shelter from the impending storm.

We may buffet against the ills of life, cast but a vacant eye upon the extravagant follies of the world, seem undaunted amid the peril of open danger, and assume the stoick in morbid contemplation of futurity—but to know the condition of Alfonso's mind would be sufficient to rouse the generous feelings of our nature, and to disclose the horror which assailed him at the sudden and unlooked-for attack of the midnight assassin.

His life was preserved by an impulse of the moment. Having wrenched the rapier from his antagonist he buried it in his body, and fearful of encountering the weapon of an associate prudently fled, not without sufficient apprehension of falling a sacrifice alike to the ruggedness of the ground, and the pursuit of a bandit. Overcome with fatigue, and drenched by the rain which now fell in torrents, he paused to listen for the sound of footsteps. Fortunately he had preserved the rapier of his antagonist, and having no means of escape, he resolved to abide the issue of the adventure or perish in the attempt. Scarcely had he formed this resolution, when his ears were assailed by a deep and hollow groan, which issued but a few paces from where he stood, and which seemed to indicate the last struggle of exhausted nature. Nothing again was heard but the howlings of the wind, and he began to be suspicious that it was the convulsive agonies of the wounded assassin, when the faint glimmering of a light shone through an adjoining coppice. Thither

he groped his way, not without considerable alarm, and though it were less likely to prove the hamlet of some honest peasant than the haunt of robbers, he was unwilling to wander about when a shelter presented itself to his view.

It was indeed a house; but miserable and mean in appearance it had proven an uncomfortable lodging in any other predicament. The door stood wide open.

At such an hour, and in such a place, this was enough to excite alarm; but curiosity is not unfrequently inseparable from suspicion, nor shall we attempt to defend the imprudence of Alfonso thus blindly to hazard his safety in such a refuge. Great god! what a spectacle presented itself; two females, one a lifeless corpse, lay stretched along the floor and bathed in blood: the other on a miserable pallet, with the head severed from the body—painted in desponding colors the danger which surrounded him, and reverberating on every fibre of the heart, he stood paralized with horror!

Awful as was the spectacle, and terrible as were the forebodings of his imagination, he hesitated between the dreadful alternative of again committing himself to the invisible dangers of the common, or to remain a prey to the poignards of overpowering numbers. What had he to expect from the relentless fury of ferocious desperadoes? but whither was he to retreat from danger? true, he had little of value to enrich the spoil of the freebooter; but the heart, already stained with blood, stands aloof from pity and void of every generous sentiment, depreciates the value of gold untainted with the blood of the unhappy traveller. No spot presented itself for concealment; and the bright blaze of the newly added faggot to the fire

bespoke the bloodhound at no distance from his kennel. Each succeeding moment presented the last; and, thus writhing under the agonies of suspense, the sound of distant footsteps shoot distinctly upon his ear! what was he to resolve? tame submission to deliberate butchery? or bravely to sell his life in fruitless combat against a band of ruffians? The thought was sudden, and in a moment carried into effect—behold him concealed under the bed-clothes, an animated carcase almost insensible of existence as the headless trunk prostrate by his side.

Thus was Alfonso disposed of when a man entered the apartment, whose dress, and venerable appearance, announced something above the level of a peasant and very distant from the character his frenzied imagination had induced him to expect.——"O god!" exclaimed the unknown, as his eyes met the mangled corpse upon the floor——"O god! o god! that I should be reserved to witness the butchery of my wife—— my only child too!——both torn from me by a ruffian protagee——yet was the monster kind!—— happily I missed my aim——hah!——I come—yes, my Elvira and my child, I come.—The villain's aim was sure—deep has his dagger plunged into the vitals of the once happy house of Aranza.——Stript of its foliage, and blasted by the reptile nourished by its shade, behold the trunk totters——!"

Scarcely had he sunk into a chair when another entered, whose ferocious aspect identified the monster just alluded to. Starting back, as if the meeting was unlooked-for, a savage grin of satisfaction glowed upon his cheek. Instantly drawing a poignard from his bosom, and brandishing it in the air,—"Now," cried he, his eyes sparkling with demonian joy,

—" now for the last finish to my work, and the duke-dom is my own."——

Alfonso had heard enough to rouse him from the torpor he endured. Retaining some faint hope of life in the wounded stranger he sprang upon the assassin, whose uplifted poignard was already aimed, and wrenching it from his grasp, buried it in his heart!

In the scuffle the stranger revived; but, alas! twas only from his gestures that Alfonso could ascertain the part he wished to take. An ineffectual struggle to raise himself from his seat, and the convulsions which distorted his manly countenance, were equally indicative of an avenging desire and the criterion of approaching dissolution. Alfonso hastened to his assistance, and to assure him of his protection: but the tide of life was in rapid ebb; and an half-stifled imprecation burst from his lips, after a feeble effort of his arm to oppose the proffered friendship of his deliverer.

All personal fear now quitted the bosom of Alfonso —no passion glowed but that of comforting the dying stranger; but the active benevolence of his heart seemed frustrated, alike, from the absence of household convenience and chirurgical assistance. Speedily he removed the dead body from the bed, and, calling forth all his strength, succeeded in placing the unhappy father upon the bloody couch of his butchered daughter. A deep stab presented itself in the stomach—the bleeding had subsided; but the livid tinge of death was already stampt upon his countenance. With fearful forebodings Alfonso applied his hand to the pulse: it yet beat; and a faint gleam of hope still supported him in the belief that repose might restore the

scattered senses of the stranger, from whose directions he might hasten in search of medical assistance. To the best of his conjecture, the morning was not far distant; and having barricaded the outer door, which would at least answer as a signal to the approach of other accomplices, he added a few fresh faggots to the fire and seated himself by its side. Of sleep he stood in much need; but the horrid imagery which surrounded him was ill calculated to invite repose. The sight of blood is ever painful to a feeling mind; —a sudden injury to our neighbor will sometimes create in us an insipient debility; and our curiosity has often been repaid by a temporary suspension of animal motion, when observing a nice chirurgical operation. An animated description of a battle begets enthusiasm; but descend to the minutiæ of carnage, to examples of brutal vengeance, and to descriptions of ghastly wounds, and each *coup de sabre* is a stab to the sensibility of the hearer. This was not a time for sleep:—present distress and anticipated attack were enough to keep even Alfonso awake.

The adventure of the night had not yet come to a close. To judge from the past he had not only to suffer inquietude for the fate of the wounded stranger, but to continue in alarm for his own personal safety. It was now evident this stranger was the same who had so rudely attacked him on the common; and of whose wound, self-preservation had compelled him to be the cause. He lamented the mistake, but more poignantly did he feel the irreparable calamity to the stranger in the double loss of a wife and daughter. Himself an orphan, Alfonso had never experienced the sweets of parental solicitude; without offspring, he was unversed in the affections which agonize a parent at the

loss of a child: but he had a heart susceptible of every tender sentiment—a heart ever ready to sympathize with the woes of all! His philanthropy was not confined to the prudence of the cautious, nor narrowed by the stiff precision of scholastick rule. This beneficent ingredient of his mind, was the joint product of misfortune and unbiased reflection. His idea of virtue was simple and unsophisticated. He had read much; but, extensive as had been his researches among books, his chief delight was to study the endless variety of human action. Early in life had he been fascinated with the scriptural maxim—"DO UNTO OTHERS THAT WHICH YOU WOULD OTHERS DO UNTO YOU." He sought to conform himself to the rule, pleased with the excellence and easy practice of what he estimated as the *ne plus ultra* of human perfection. But maturer years discovered, not only how little it was practised, but, how irreconcilable was the maxim to the ordinary intercourses of society. He had yet to detect the powerful influence of the passions; and the evidence of their ascendancy in human action, established to his conviction, the mechanism of the mind.

We are willing to bestow some pains in our endeavor to illustrate the character of each individual, connected with the subject of these volumes, to trace their separate springs of action, and to draw aside the veil of mystery which not unfrequently conceals to poison the best, and to influence unworthy acclamations for the basest attributes of our nature.—This seems to be the most accurate model for the biographer. We confess ourselves equally unqualified to sit in judgment between man and his creator, as we are ignorant from whence such lawless authority could originate. It is said to be essential, that the historian

perpetually show himself on the side of virtue, in order to excite indignation against the vicious; still the finite understanding of the ablest, and the partialities incident to nature, do not authorize what is at best a doubtful advantage to the youthful mind. But we are engaged in a humbler composition than that of history. Simple memoir requires that we should be but lively and interesting; and if to these we succeed in a just delineation of character, we shall leave our readers to their own reflections upon the good or bad consequences of moral agency.

Alfonso arrogated to himself no merit in the doing of a good action; it appeared to him the bare fulfilment of a social tie. If instrumental to the injury of another, he was either innocently the cause or it proceeded from sudden impulse of the moment: for both he was ready to atone as the nature of the case seemed to demand. He accepted every man as he found him, and where he could not approve, he must persuade himself of the motive before he would condemn.—In the shape of man he had never encountered such an instance of enormity as that which now presented itself to his eyes. The deep shade of brutal depravation which covered the assassin prostrate at his feet, associated in his mind an instantaneous horror against the individual and the crime. From an impulse of curiosity natural to him, he could have wished to ascertain from the lips of the deceased the motives which influenced the perpetration of such a scene of blood. But such a confession was interrupted from the sure direction of the dagger—as if engraven upon the blade, it carried a label to the heart, cutting in twain the threads of life to precipitate its victim in a moment to eternity! He had seen and heard enough to act decidedly as he did.

Apart from personal alarm, the native goodness of his heart was enough to prompt him in aid of the fallen and oppressed. When we come to record the singular transactions of his past life, and connect an incident of the day before, which introduced him to the adventure of this, his would require no additional illustration. Not the victim of credulity he was above the idle fantasies of superstition; but there are moments in the period of life when the most undaunted are apt to associate occurrences essentially unconnected, and from the mass thus formed—

"*give to airy vision a local habitation and a name.*"

The savage distortion of the ruffian's countenance pourtrayed in animated coloring the depravity of his mind. What was the contrast of the unhappy objects of his brutality! on *this* could yet be traced the remains of no ordinary beauty. The trunkless head of the other presented in perfect symmetry the remains of unparalleled loveliness that seemed to express a degree of parental supplication which baffled the ingenuity of language to describe. On *this* was engraven a placid smile of indifference indicative of a soul exalted by innocence and perfection, estimating existence as unenviable when purchased by the loss of honor and of virtue! Instinctively Alfonso drew a pencil from his pocket, and having placed the gory head upon his knee, he copied a true resemblance and placed the paper in his bosom. Still gazing upon the lovely features of the original, he imprinted a kiss upon its lips which seemed to glow in lively unison with his own. Alas! twas all illusion—but he fancied it were real; and clasping the bloody image to his heart, melted into tears!——

A sudden groan dissolved the charm—gently he re

placed the head upon the floor (for no alarm could induce him to dash with rudeness from him the lovely relict of so fair a form) a rustling in the bed was an happy presage to his hopes——twas so—the stranger lived! hastily he ran towards him—he grasped his hand—it felt moist—it had a pulse.—"And do you live?" cried Alfonso.

"O! my Elvira, o! my Antonio—" was all the reply.——

For a moment Alfonso paused in silent meditation. While there were hopes of life he wished to save the stranger. But how was he to console him for the irreparable loss he had sustained—how remove the impression that he was an accomplice in the murder? Distinctly he heard the unequal breathing of the sufferer, and wished to speak in alleviation of his pain. At that moment he fancied he beheld the countenance of some one at the window; but whether this were so in reality had now become of little consequence. The mind cannot encompass at the same instant, two objects with equal degrees of interest. We want the liberty of indifference. The strongest impression uniformly holds pre-eminence. All personal alarm was forgotten in the anxiety to extend relief to the unhappy object of his contemplation. He still held the hand of him he wished to save. Now and then a feeble effort was made to release it. At length he began, in the first place, to quiet the fears of the stranger, to assure him of his safety, and to tender to him every assistance he could bestow.—The heart never enjoys delight equal to that which it feels in administering happiness to another. Alfonso in pouring forth the flowings of his sensibility, partook of that exquisite pleasure which he imparted so seasonably to the wondering object of his solicitude.

Poor old man! reviving from the agonies of suspense, snatched from the gripe of the assassin, to behold himself amid this scene of horror, protected, pitied, cherished!—Half raising himself upon one elbow and looking over the other as if doubting the reality of what he heard—still grasping the hand of Alfonso—his inquiring eye spoke the language he could not articulate—again he doubted; but soon as he witnessed the sword drop from Alfonso's hand and the mild compassion which beamed upon his countenance, his own settled into calm serenity. In a feeble voice he inquired of whom he merited this seasonable interposition? Alfonso assured him he was in perfect safety; but fearful of the consequences of too much exertion, begged of him to be tranquil and composed until daylight should enable him to go in search of medical assistance.

"Ah do not leave me," cried the stranger, "I do not think my wound will prove fatal. It is painful I grant, and my loss of blood has been profuse; but methinks the weapon struck no vital part. Beside the villain Diego lurks in the neighborhood and will way-lay you, as well, for tendering assistance to me, as to prevent your becoming testimony against him. Then will he return to finish the work he has begun—no longer capable of resistance he will find me an easy prey!"

Alfonso soon quieted his fears by pointing to the ruffian's lifeless corpse. Again he intreated him to be composed; he feared the consequences of over-exertion, and at length succeeded in dissipating his uneasy apprehensions. His eye once more caught the figure he had before seen as it flitted past the window. It was impossible that he should now be deceived. The door,

however, was well barricaded, and he had the power at least of preparing against a sudden attack. "Pray, seignior," inquired he of the stranger, "had Diego any accomplice? or have you any domesticks with you?"

"Only one," was the reply, "but the coward fled. Without one spark of gratitude for an old, indulgent master, he tamely submitted to a conspiracy against his house; and, without courage to defend a life which had been the succor and only prop of his own, basely fled that my wife and daughter should be butchered before my eyes. Had Sebastian stood but true, my god! what should I have given—o! matchless villany!—but yesterday I passed my peaceful domain, surrounded by every blessing which honor, affluence, and domestick happiness could desire. The past, but for one exception, has been a series of sweet enjoyment; and the prospect of the future presented, in rich continuity, the succession of what were gone! Alas, how impervious the veil which shuts the future from our view. In one hour have I fallen from a pinnacle of splendid affluence to a state of bankruptcy, never to be settled or wound up.—Mine is a tale of woe!—every social tie is burst asunder—all my afflictions are in arms within me; and like an host of flinty creditors devour the schedule of my miserable estate. In me, behold the duke Aranza, yesterday he was the happiest of the happy—yesterday he was a husband—o! matchless wife—a father now bereaved of filial love—all that was enviable on this side the grave—and by a villain—a nephew too—whose blood I envy you! Across this common had we to pass. Whether by accident, or from the hellish contrivance of Diego the carriage broke down close by where we are. The day was far advanced. The atmosphere already darkened with accumulating

vapor, and lowering clouds announced the approaching hurricane. No means were left to repair our carriage; no alternative but to continue through the night unsheltered from the storm. This hovel at length discovered itself, and we were glad to embrace the miserable accommodation it presented. Though no slave of superstition, I could not banish from me the horrid forebodings which agitated my spirits as we entered this apartment —a fearful presage of what was to follow vibrated on every nerve. The fibres of the heart shrunk back as if death stood armed in every shape before my eyes—involuntarily I withheld my wife, clasped her in my arms —twas our last embrace—portentous omen of her approaching butchery!

"Throughout our journey I remarked a peculiar uneasiness to overspread the countenance of Diego. It was impossible to overlook the change I saw without inquiring the cause. He felt the keenness of the remark; but, consummate hypocrite as he was, he had an answer ready to ensnare. So deeply had the fiend found a place in my affection, that he was dear to me as an only son. But a few hours back, and I looked forward with every pleasing hope to the moment the monster, united to my daughter, should present me with issue to heir the titles and the fortune of a house destined to be extinguished and cut short from posterity by the very hand it fostered!

"The hovel was without an inhabitant; but the embers of the fire and the furniture, mean as it is, seemed but recently deserted. Diego represented it as a place where, formerly benighted, he had sought shelter. He spoke of the cottager as a plain industrious man—one whose hospitality might ornament more elevated life. His absence he treated with unconcern; fuel, perchance

provision, might be his errand abroad. So dextrous, indeed, were his explanations that suspicion was lulled into security, and we became forgetful even of the very comforts we stood most in need. In fine, my wife and daughter, having previously put up their accustomed prayers to heaven, took possession of this pallet, and soon began to taste the sweets of innocent repose. Diego muffled up in his mantle upon yonder bench, seemed following their example. Sebastian having provided for his horses, lay along the floor. The hour was yet early, and I seated myself by the fire in hopes of apologizing to our host for the freedom of our intrusion; but wearied and fatigued, my eyelids closed also.

"Horrible was the dream I had. The gemain of nature's terrors was exhausted with the monstrous forms embodied by the imagination. Methought, while traversing my domain accompanied by my wife and daughter, we chanced to light upon a wretched traveller extended on the ground, and weltering in his blood—speechless, exhausted, and ready to expire under many a wound. Horror at first nailed us to the spot; but commiseration and a desire to relieve his misery were instantly predominant in each. My wife and I flew to raise his head; Antonio ran for water to bathe his wounds, and to moisten lips whose livid tinge was another indication of departing life. Methought we succeeded in bringing back animation, and removing the hapless unknown to our home. Time, and no ordinary care, brings on a rapid change, finally methinks, to restore this object of our watchful solicitude to repay us with the sweet consolation of our humane endeavors. O! listen to the reward, methought my benevolence experienced from this ingrate. Behold him to put off the shape and appearance of an human form—thus haggard and de-

formed, now crawling like a reptile—now bristling up like the merciless hyena—now extending the talons of a vulture—changing alternately to all the endless variety of hateful vision, prowling at large throughout the house. Now I see it in the unpolluted chamber of my wife, assume the varied congregation of wanton terror, myself unarmed writhing under every fruitless effort to oppose the all devouring monster! my soul, sickening at the sight, shakes off the morbid drowsiness of sleep to discover—what? the identity of a fancied vision! I closed my eyes, resigned to the happiness heaven had bestowed—I awoke to be for ever miserable—but a moment past and I beheld my wife and daughter freed from alarm, enjoying the tranquil slumbers of their innocence—the succeeding to present them already buttered at my feet!—yet another, and I had never known the torments I now endure—one grave had received us all—one inscription had recorded the final period of our house!

"I awoke with just sufficient time to ward off the blow aimed at my existence by Diego. The wretch, missing his aim, fled into the common. I called Sebastian; but the coward, or accomplice as I now suspect, had gone before. Forward I ran in pursuit; but the darkness favored their escape for a while. At length, wearied with my search, I was returning to mourn over the lifeless bodies, when I espied one villain in my way. Ignorant of my approach I watched the moment to secure my victim. Softly I stole behind, for I considered myself privileged to adopt a part, dishonorable in another cause, and concluding that my blow was sure, I aimed a desperate push. Accidentally I missed. The sword was wrenched from my grasp, and the villain run me through the body!"

After retracing this sad picture of his misfortunes, the duke seemed to acquire relief. The day now beginning to dawn, Alfonso sallied forth in the hope of obtaining assistance, that the duke might be removed to some more confortable lodging. Before the door, and far as the eye could carry was a dreary waste: just hid from view stood the house upon the skirts of a deep and gloomy forest; a fitter spot to perpetrate mischief was not to be imagined. Exactly suited to Diego's purpose, he made sure of accomplishing his design without the hazard of interruption. But how he was to clear himself of suspicion was more than Alfonso could account. That he sought his aggrandizement in the murder of Aranza was evident; but a period was put to the distinguished pre-eminence of the first among the grandees of Spain, and with it the author of its downfall: a melancholy instance of the instability of human affairs!

The storm was already past; and the sun, which now shone through the foliage, was quietly absorbing the vapor which remained. At a short distance from the house stood the horses, feebly sheltered from the inclemency of the night by the expanding branches of a stately oak. Near to them the carriage, which, upon slight inspection, appeared designedly loosened in the springs. Unacquainted with the country, and fearing to leave the duke unprotected, he began busily to employ himself in repairing the carriage for his removal when a man sprung from an adjoining thicket, and prostrating himself at his feet, petitioned for pardon and protection! A momentary alarm took possession of Alfonso; but as the supplicant was unarmed, and observing the frantick gestures he assumed, personal fear instantly vanished. It was Sebastian! the trembling at-

titude of the man was less indicative of guilt than of mean, degrading cowardice. The answers to the several inquiries of Alfonso, corroborated this presumption. He had been neither bribed, nor yet an accomplice in the hellish plot of Diego. Awaked by the screams of his dying mistress he had not courage to assail the blood-thirsty villain, and fearful he was destined to become the next victim, had watched a favorable opportunity to escape the dagger in reserve. The joint efforts of the two soon repaired the carriage for the reception of the duke, to whose satisfaction Alfonso explained the innocence of Sebastian. Having taken a last farewel of the lifeless bodies of his wife and daughter, they succeeded in placing the duke in the carriage, and under the direction of Sebastian they soon reached a comfortable inn at a short distance beyond the confines of the common.

CHAPTER II.

Medical aid was the next object of Alfonso's search. Spain is not a soil for science: happily calculated for the native indolence of those who people it, they have only to sow in order to reap a crop, abundantly to supply their ordinary wants: but the seeds of science shoot forth to wither under the operation of their untutored hands.

Every country has languished under its particular period of barbarism. In the progress to civilization some,

indeed, have discovered a precosity above the rest; but in their career to perfection, only to display a nicer concatination in the awful destiny of approaching revolution. Where are the republicks of Sparta, of Athens, and of Rome? gone as if they never were; sunk again into pristine barbarity the rude hand of time has left but the remains of a statue, or the ruins of a temple from whose decay the traveller collects an idea of their ancient greatness.

Spain never ranked, either in splendid achievement or in the fine arts, with her contemporary nations. If it be matter of curious speculation to trace the progress of a people from the earliest source to their highest pitch of refinement, no former age will more amply repay the labor of the inquirer. Let him begin with America, and from the first discovery of an immense territory, colonized by a few adventurous Britons, he will behold with increasing wonder extraordinary vicissitudes of fortune, producing in a few centuries a nation rivalling all Europe in commerce and in government. Let him next turn to the history of France—commence with the reign of the IVth Henry;—what a vast and multifarious picture of human enterprize and political arcana occupies the period down to the reign of the last of the Capets!—France, towards the close of the eighteenth century, presents a fruitful subject of interesting inquiry. We perceive four-and-twenty millions of people swayed by an odious oligarchy, grow restless from oppression, rise in a moment in arms against the thraldom of priestcraft, and the overbearing spirit of a dissolute nobility—no revolution was ever so suddenly accomplished; no monarchy so perfectly overthrown—no republick, so happy in its auspices, was ever reared upon the ruins of despotism. Mark the talents which composed

the *Flere Rias*, and the torrent of ability which sprang at once from an enslaved people. Observe the conduct of the deputies to the first convention, and we have a specimen of the unbridled passions of lawless authority, levelling all distinctions; sweeping away a popular religion which had endured for ages, and perplexed amid the havock and desolation they had created; running from one extreme to another without a pause for reflection—in the end, to languish under the poison they had engendered; again to sink under the adventurous arm of a soldier of fortune, who, first as a prelude to the imperial purple, seizes upon the consulate to be proclaimed perpetual dictator!

Next turn to that singular phenomenon the british empire. What brilliant achievements, as well in the glory of arms as in the science of jurisprudence, embellish the page of history. But why dwell upon a theme so universally known to be the admiration, if not the envy of the world! Volumes have already been exhausted upon the subject, and, though we could indulge with pleasure and delight upon the endless variety it unites, we shall not consume the leisure of our readers with observations which engage such universal attention.

Spain, not benefitting by the experience of contemporary nations, uniformly and sedulously keeps in curb the progress of science, vainly imagining with what facility she can govern her subjects while they continue in ignorance, and are awed by the mummeries of the romish church. If she has succeeded in this, other causes have operated to accelerate her decline. There is a medium in every thing; and though we deprecate the sinister views of what is stiled a *strong government*, her weak and imbecile policy announce her

approaching vassalage to France.* Necessity is usually described as the parent of invention. While the ingenuity of every country has been racked in the discovery of efficient means of aggrandizement, Spain, from the rich produce of her colonies, is blind to her real advantage. Silver and gold are a mere circulating medium, and pass in exchange for the necessaries and the luxuries of life: In proportion to their scarcity, or their plenty, industry will increase and diminish. The treasury of Madrid, thus plentifully supplied with those precious metals, does away the obligation of employing the accustomed means of commerce and agriculture for the attainment of wealth. Nursed in affluence, she has indulged to an excess, and languishing from habitual indolence, she is constitutionally without energy. Though magnificent in her means, she is the feeblest in her ends; and the crafty designs of a powerful and rapacious neighbor may now seize upon her treasury with impunity, and reduce her to splendid beggary in a month. The mines of Mexico are the bane of her existence—they have plunged her into actual inanity. Every science rots at her threshold. Priest-ridden, and swallowed up in superstition, the human intellects are poisoned and degraded. Where she can boast of one Villena, one Cervantes, and one Quevedo, she has to blush for a thousand Philips.

If a loquacious parade of his skill, and the endless catalogue of cases which he had encountered to complete radical cures, were proofs of the ability of the chirurgeon, which Alfonso procured the duke, Lampedo

* The recent patricide, attempted by the prince of Asturias; and general Junot's march to Madrid, would seem to announce the immediate approach of this epoch.

was the ablest of the profession. But whether from novelty of symptom, stubborn viscera of the wound, or the cupidity of an artful jobmaker, his patient certainly endured a long and painful illness. Sometimes deceived by appearances, every happy presage of convalescence announced to Alfonso a certainty of speedy recovery—the returning morn to banish all hope by a rapid increase of every ill-omened aspect.

The day after their arrival, at the house whither the duke had been removed, Sebastian was dispatched to Saragossa to invite clerical assistance in paying the last obsequies to the ill-fated duchess and her daughter. Saragossa was the city from whence Alfonso had departed the afternoon of that day which witnessed the horrid catastrophe we have just detailed. It was distant only two leagues, and Sebastian, without much delay, returned in company with one of the franciscan brotherhood, of whose superior, father Miguel, we shall have to speak hereafter.

A month had almost expired, and the duke still languished in a state of inauspicious convalescence. His lodgings were far from uncomfortable, and though he was now attended by his own domesticks, still the humane disposition of Alfonso attached him to the bed of one whose corporeal wound he had innocently been the cause. The duke, too, became habituated to his society, and having experienced in a singular degree the unwearied attendance of a total stranger, could have ill sustained the intelligence of his departure. It had been cruel in Alfonso to desert him. It had even been unjust; for, though the duke was still ignorant that it was from him he had received his wound, he was still entitled to a continuation of his presence while he languished in so critical a state.

The picture before Alfonso presented a fruitful subject to his ardent mind. But a month since and he was an orphan, whose only patrimony was unsullied character, and the scanty subsistence of an officer in the service of Spain. Honor, with him, was a principle not a passion. Unambitious, the limit of his desire was a competency sufficient to remove him from want. He sought independence less for its extrinsick advantage, than to have the painful severity of being indebted to another. Educated in the school of adversity, he had been taught to place confidence only in himself. With his rudiments he imbibed, as it were, a presentiment of his future destiny. Destitute of the prospects as well of birth as of fortune, he had not been nurtured in the lap of expectation. Blessed with a robust constitution, an open countenance, and a fine symmetry of person, he had grown up to the estate of manhood, a perfect specimen of the scholar and the gentleman. In the period of one short month a novel transition of fortune awaited him, equally remarkable for the sudden change, and the distressing incident which produced it. He was to acquire the friendship and protection of the first and most powerful grandee of Spain!

The duke had now been too long a sufferer without any positive relief. Hitherto the natural vigor of his constitution had imparted strength to struggle against the anguish of his wound—but now, that no medicinal virtue was likely to avail, he grew restless and impatient. Languishing under the afflictions of body and of mind, all his fortitude forsook him and he was fast sinking a victim to his hopeless state. Happy and composed when Alfonso was in his presence, he was ever wretched when absent a moment from his apartment. On Alfonso was concentrated all his consolation.

One morning as he had entered the room, from whence he had escaped during a short slumber of his patient to taste the fresh purity of the air, the duke called him to his bed-side, and grasping him by the hand, thus began :

"My son, for by such an epithet I feel disposed to call you, whither have you been? I know I am troublesome, but the goodness of your heart will incline you to pardon my importunities. From you have I experienced kindness and attention I had not to expect—such as I can only appreciate, never repay. About to close my eyes upon the world; to yield up an existence no longer enviable, I mean to put your friendship to a trial. Young and unprovided, the charge I am about to confide to you may not be wholly unworthy your attention. It will, at best, be a poor equivalent for the inconvenience I have borne you; and as it is likely to involve you in additional concern, I have only to hope you will execute my last desire without reluctance. Apology I have none, and though I repeat that no reward is commensurate with the debt I owe to you, the issue will at least accelerate your advancement in your profession.

"You tell me you are a subaltern in the infantry. From this day, you will consider yourself attached to the royal regiment of——It has long been a meritorious corpse, and from the glorious honors it has achieved, holds a distinguished rank in the estimation of the king, who was graciously pleased to confer upon me the command on the death of the late colonel. A troop is now vacant, and I cannot bestow it upon an officer who has a greater claim to my patronage. I feel I cannot long survive. At my death you will hasten to Madrid, and exhibit my commission to his majesty. Accompany-

ing it will be found a memorial setting forth the various services I have performed the state.

Enjoying the confidence, and I may add the personal friendship of his majesty, perhaps, there shall be no occasion for this customary formality. But the best of princes are often influenced by a corrupt ministry. Nature was never more lavish in the production of a chaste heart, than she has proved herself in Charles the Fourth: but, born a prince, he is essentially above us all. I know him well. Armed with sovereign authority he would not intentionally injure the meanest of his subjects; but, from the nature of his situation, it is necessary he should have servants with whom to advise, and in whom to confide; and it is from the crafty ambition of the insidious who, choking the avenues to his person, riot in the spoil of an oppressed people. This memorial contains also the calamity which has visited the house of Aranza. The title dies with me—o Alfonso, my heart bleeds afresh! I once had a son to fill the vacancy I now occasion to the grandees of the empire—but the chasm must remain—I have myself to blame."

Here the duke paused, to give vent to the tears which would flow in spite of all his efforts; and Alfonso, taking advantage of the moment, besought him to think more favorably of his situation. "I assure your grace," said he, "the physician has not began to despair."

"He is deceived, Alfonso," interrupted the duke—"the hand of death is upon me. One day more, and all my misery is at an end. What others look upon with dismay, I hail with joy unspeakable. What others pause upon with doubtful apprehension, shrink from and feel appalled, I embrace with all my soul. Rank, affluence, courtly splendor, and all the pageantry of life

have now no relish left. Joy, nor love, nor worldly peace are on this side the grave—already half-interred, my mortal part feels cold and cheerless—my immortal, warm and animated, glowing with expectation and desire ineffable!—Have I your promise, Alfonso, that you will carry my memorial to the throne?"

"Most solemnly do I pledge myself; but," continued Alfonso, "do not think so desperately of your condition: many happy years are yet in store for you—O! if your grace would—but——" He could add no more: —oppressed with the feelings which the scene occasioned, Alfonso turned aside to conceal the tear which glistened in his eye.

"Continue, my son," cried the duke, grasping him again by the hand—"speak freely: if I have the power, your intreaty shall not be vain."

"It is," rejoined Alfonso, "that you would live, if not for yourself, for me! commit me not to a sea of endless troubles. Do not abandon me to stings of never-ceasing remorse. *I* was your assassin, and could not long survive the consciousness of acquiring honors by such bloody means. Know, that lost in the darkness of the night, I wandered imperceptibly into the common where you were. You discovered me, and having a just cause of suspicion that I was Diego, ran upon me as you did. I viewed you in the light of some desperate bandit, wrenched the weapon from your hands as it passed beneath my arm, and turned its point back upon yourself."

"You astonish me, exclaimed the duke." Kind heaven! how happy am I that I missed my aim. Happy that you told me this! now have I greater cause than ever to manifest the place you occupy in my affections. The villain my unhappy star suspected you to be

has poisoned the cup of life, and I sink into the grave, blessed with the power of making some atonement for the injury innocently intended.——But before I bid farewel to all the world, let me to the point which is to prove the trial of your attachment.

" I have a niece, Alfonso—young, beautiful, and heiress to all my wealth. In the convent of St. Clare, this lovely bud, the last of the houses of Jacca and Aranza, has been immured for years. To introduce her to the world was the object of the fatal journey we were upon. Poor innocent! she must never know how the family name of Jacca has been tarnished in her brother. Sister to that Diego, who should, alas! have died before, it is meet that you who saved her guardian's life should succeed him in that office when he dies. Violenta, since her father's death, fancies herself without a nearer relative than her parental uncle, and I am anxious she should continue in that belief.

" The count Jacca was my elder brother. He died some years back, leaving two children Diego and her. The count educated to the church arrived to its highest honors, dying bishop of Saragossa and grand inquisitor of the kingdom of Arragon. Few men venerate more the sacred duties of religion than I do. From a soldier and a courtier you may discredit a confession which savors of the repentant sinner on the verge of eternity. But you yourself are a soldier. The purity of your mind I have witnessed to admire; you will agree with me that without virtue, honor cannot be. A christian I am in its fullest sense; but no friend to the interpolations which have accumulated to debase it since the days of the primitive church. Charity I hold the choicest of its inculcations. I may have pitied the mussulman in his mosque; but my heart would not suffer me to con-

temn him. My soul is charmed with pure devotion, and would be elevated amid a thousand sectarian adorations of one almighty being—inspired with as much sublimity in the temple at Mecca, as in the apost olick cathedral at Rome.

"My only difference with my brother was on the score of religion—but never once did I presume to introduce the subject. I knew the habits of his life, and was silent. Unfortunately he fancied he knew mine, and would unceasingly perplex his ingenuity with vain applications that I would abandon my profession, and my suppositious pursuits. But, as one of the pillars of the realm, I considered until the golden age should revive, the soldier as useful a character in the kingdom as the bishop of Saragossa: confined to the circumscribed knowledge of clerical life, he likened the government of a kingdom to that of a diocese. His practice had never presented to his imagination how much more was the facility to deal out precept to the bigotted few, than to restrain the passions of the many. Wedded to his ideal whims, I left him, ever to himself—and to the capricious regulations of his own family. What was the result?—he married a woman of fashion after acquiring a meretricious dispensation from his holiness the Pope. Smitten with his wealth, poor woman, she bartered away her prudence for eternal misery, and *he* who would preside o'er kingdoms! found his incapacity to subdue a family. Educating his son after his own conceit, he taught him dissimulation in place of manly ingenuousness. Inculcating the belief that this alone was gospel, and that heterdox. Without explaining the deformity of vice, he vainly preached up the *innate* beauties of virtue. Pleased with the outward piety of the hypocrite he was deceived in the rank depravity of the collegian to discover, when

too late, the complicated vices of a finished vagabond: still without conviction, that the habits of the man originated in the pernicious education of the boy.

"Heir to an immense fortune, Diego was the darling prodigal of a blind parent. With every species of debauchery within his purchase, his unbridled appetite battened on excess. Every rank weed went down; and basking in the sunshine of pleasure, and brousing awhile on the summit of lewdness, till step by step, he plunged headlong into the valley of corruption, to bring infamy upon his family and to become an outlaw to the insulted statutes of the realm. Had he stopped here, I should have been happy still; but, alas! Alfonso you witnessed the accomplishment of my misery to overtake the progress of his villanny.——A spectator of the wretched system adopted in his education, I vainly fancied I should yet succeed in curbing his licentious morals. I forgot his bribles, pardoned the crime which had outlawed him from his country, and opened my arms to his protection. But what was the return I merited for this ill-judged extension of my clemency! perceiving no chance of recovering the inheritance from which he had been cut off by the intercession of his father with the king, he watched a favorable moment to realize the diabolical wish of the roman tyrant!* making one neck* of my whole house, he severed it in two, in the hope of the royal pardon for his former irregularities, when all impediments were removed to a dukedom conferred on me for services highly beneficial to the state. You saved it from polution, and like another Chaerea, dispatched a monster worthy of such a prototype.

* That the roman people had but one neck was a desire worthy of Caligula.

Violenta to whom I allude, is the younger sister of Diego. There were equal disparity in their years as in their dispositions. Her mother dying while she was yet an infant, I besought the count to permit her to live with me; exactly of an age with my Antonia, I wished to make companions of the two, that both might equally benefit by the tuition of my beloved Elvira.—My capricious brother as yet blind to his son's excesses, and wedded to his erroneous estimate of human happiness, returned for answer that she was destined for a convent in conformity to that unnatural policy of preserving entire to his son the undivided affluence and splendor of his title. I was abroad in the service of my country, when the accounts of his death were received. To me he bequeathed one half of his fortune which I accepted of, only to make over to Diego. The other moiety was settled upon the convent of St. Clare, in which his daughter was destined to take the veil. Happily for my niece, her father should commit a pious mistake as it regards this last bequeath. In the will I am appointed trustee, reserving to me power to nominate my successor; with a clause that nothing but the interest shall be the revenue to the convent until Violenta shall consent to take the veil" My reverend brother, a dupe to his own avarice, had no doubt that his daughter would prefer pious splendor to starvation; never contemplating that, as trustee and with no excessive generosity, I should not only exert my influence against such a determination, on the part of Violenta, but offer to her an asylum in my family.——The abbess has long, but ineffectually, struggled to draw from her the hateful vow. But the aversion of Violenta to a monastick life is unconquerable, and my chief hope to release her from confinement is a compromise with the convent. Pos-

sessed of my fortune, she can well dispense with her own. Hasten to her Alfonso at my death, comfort her in distress, and prepare her for the new scene she is about to engage in. She has charms to captivate: I wish, above all things, a mutual passion—would to God it may be so! you are worthy of each other, and may your first love be less fatal than mine. Let her, however, continue in ignorance of her brother's guilt: The knowledge of his vices will poison her happiness; I have appointed you executor of my will, and her guardian. I know none in whose honor and virtue I can so well repose a trust so sacred. I owe this confidence to you in gratitude—it is the best security for the future happiness of my niece."

Alfonso stood in mute astonishment; the rapid succession of ideas which floated upon his mind, deprived him of all power to express sufficiently the weight of obligation for so singular an instance of affection from a stranger. Unused to kind expressions of friendship, habituated to disappointments, innured to the vicissitudes of life, and abandoned by the world at large, his feelings on the present occasion are difficult to be described. The duke read the commotion he had produced; and rightly appreciating the nature of Alfonso's feelings, hastened to relieve them. He renewed his professions of gratitude, called him again by the endearing appellation of son, and concluded by urging him to the execution of his trust.

If Alfonso hesitated a moment it was not because he was undecided in the nature of his reply. Transported by the repeated assurances of the duke's affection, and the complexion of that confidence reposed in him, he

was solicitous to express his obligation in language as powerful as were his feelings.

"Thanks to my God," cried the duke for the tranquillity of my mind—but stay—there is one thing yet which still remains to be performed. *That*, Alfonso," he added, with solemn emphasis, "you cannot do, though you may aid me in its accomplishment. In the capital of Arragon dwells a good and virtuous man. He is a monk, and many a time have I joined in the enthusiastick plaudits of an admiring multitude—many a time have I myself been witness to the generous principles which adorn his mind. Numberless are the instances of his charitable and benevolent disposition. He it is, Alfonso, above all men I have a desire to converse with before I quit the unsubstantial pleasures of this world. Saragossa is not far from this—may I request you to see him; his name is Miguel, superior of the Franciscan monastery.——Tell him who I am—the condition I am in, and the nature of my request. He knows me well and will guess my meaning."

Alfonso departed in conformity: he was curious to develope the motives which so suddenly occasioned the duke to send for the monk. He retraced the conversation they had just had; but without effect. His curiosity was roused, but not satisfied: the solemnity with which he spoke, too, was remarkable. He recollected the habits of the duke; compared them with those of a monk, but all were of no avail. It was a mystery which baffled his understanding.

At length arrived at the monastery, it was some time before he could gain admission. When conducted into the presence of the abbot, he was struck with his phy-

siognomy; he had expected to meet a cold, haughty, and austere conventual, and beheld a pleasing image of venerable philanthropy. Having delivered his brief message, the good old man turned aside in deep meditation; his rapid stride, his anxious inquiries, and the sudden changes of his countenance, confirmed Alfonso in the mystery he suspected and redoubled his curiosity. He endeavored to draw from the abbot some explanation, but without effect.

"The duke Aranza, at the point of death," cried Miguel recovering from his reverie, "and I still here?—pray be seated my son."

In a short time he entered with a letter in his hand. "My son," said he, "it is impossible to leave the convent at this moment—to-morrow I shall be master of my time. Brother Ambrosio will accompany you to the duke; take with you this letter, it will revive his drooping spirits; but hasten back with all dispatch."

Alfonso did as he was desired. The duke no sooner read the letter, than his countenance announced the prophetick promises of the monk. His spirits became more lively and animated, even his bodily pain exhibited symptoms of decrease. The following day Alfonso was again dispatched to the monastery, more and more amazed at all he saw. Miguel asked with a smile if his assurances had been verified. "I knew it" he cried.—"my medicine never fails, permit me to offer you some refreshment my son; I'll attend you presently to the duke."

CHAPTER III.

It has been mentioned that Alfonso was an officer in the spanish service. The regiment of ———, in which he served in the rank of lieutenant, formed part of the legion which lined the frontiers of Portugal, when a rupture, between the two kingdoms, was expected in the year 179—. A few months antecedently to the period we now speak of, all differences having been accommodated the troops, to the exception of a few, were recalled and Alfonso's regiment marched into Arragon having the city of Saragossa for its head-quarters. He had been attached to this corps from his first *debut* in the spanish army—comprising a period of something less than three years. The same colonel was still in command; and the good understanding which uniformly subsisted among the officers in general, together with the character of the regiment itself, had preserved its original staff to the exception of one or two death vacancies.

The profession of a soldier is at best an idle life, and ever the parent of *ennui* to an active mind. But fond of letters, and the cultivation of science, Alfonso suffered little depression from the endless uniformity of his condition. The hours which intervened the duties of his profession, were parcelled out in select variety. Temperate in his living, and chaste in his conversation, he was never observed in the midnight bacchanalian.

Lively in his humor, and sprightly in his imagination, the sallies of his wit were distinguished by feeling, modesty and deference. When no longer pleased with the convivial board, or when the prattling of a vain gallant, cards, or a tedious circumlocution of parade etiquette ceased to entertain, he would retire from the mess room to seek it among the families he knew, or realize it in study and retirement. Honored by the friendship of his commander, beloved by his brother officers, and courted by a few families of distinction in the neighborhood, he was as happy as one without relations, and a mysterious cloud about his birth, could expect.

From the officers of the regiment he selected one as the companion of all his visits, the associate in all his studies, and the confidant in all his secrets—no! there was one secret he had preserved entire—it was his native country and the singular events of his youth. Captain Bernard was his senior in years as well as in rank. Like himself, chaste in sentiments and fond of science, he was brave, humane, honorable in his dealings, sincere and permanent in his attachments. There was another circumstance which contributed much, not only to the foundation of their intimacy, but to strengthen their mutual friendship. All their brother officers were affluent and chiefly younger sons of nobility. Alfonso's only subsistence was his pay; and Bernard though he enjoyed an annuity, purchased from the wreck of his family, once opulent, it was slender in itself, and inadequate to contend against the extravagance which surrounded him. Happy for both they had resolution to withstand the folly of their associates, and philosophy sufficient to persevere in an abstraction from superfluity. Both managed so well in the arrangement and distribution of their finances, that they realized a parity of appearance with

their associates, even in the practice of a steady system of economy.

There is a happy mixture of honor and noble frankness of disposition in the military character, which seems peculiar to the profession. Ever conspicuous, it is the spontaneous effusion of genuine patriotism and unsophisticated honesty. The habits of a soldier might incline many to doubt the existence of sentiments seemingly foreign to the din of arms, and the passive machines of a ruling faction; but distinct from the mass of the people, he is habituated to the peculiar prejudices of his associates; and the heart untainted by the selfish passions which inflame the votaries of wealth, he is equally prompt to avenge the enemies of his country and the insult offered to himself as susceptible to the appeal of indigence and affliction. How different the character of the intriguing courtier, the commercial speculist, the quibbling lawyer, or the heated zealot! The soldier's acceptation of honor is undeviating. In the latter, where we might record one single instance of generous feeling, there would be ten to poison and obliterate the tribute we would bestow. Beyond this, however, we cannot applaud. The idle life of a soldier rarely spares him from reproach. Intemperance is a vice not only as it regards the morals of the man, but as it impairs and destroys the constitution:—she is the offspring of idleness—the twin sister of play.

Beloved by all their messmates the society of Bernard and Alfonso was eagerly courted, and various the stratagems imployed to decoy them to the hazard-table. Although in this regiment it was not encouraged perhaps, to an equal extent with other corps in the service, yet it was too predominant; and sensible of the

insidious influence of the passion, both obstinately declined every overture which was made.

Alfonso was indebted to his friend for advice on this as well as on other subjects. He had not experienced the advantages of precept Bernard had; and though he too lost his father before he was sensible of the misfortune, he had a mother! From her he acquired the rudiments of virtue—to her he was indebted for the rich endowments of his mind. She it was who taught him the history of that father he had never known, and the lesson had its influence with the son. She described this father as the best, the tenderest of husbands—one who was once affluent; but play, cursed play, though it never changed his affections, it ruined his fortune, and drove him from affluence to a cottage!

Not long after, the regiment became stationary in the vicinity of Saragossa. Bernard returned unusually late from a party to which Alfonso also had been invited; but to which, by reason of military duty, he could not attend. As was the custom of Bernard, he entered the apartment of his friend in order to take a parting glass before he retired to his own. He was uncommonly reserved, and after finishing a goblet of wine and water. he threw himself into a chair lost in meditation. Alfonso, struck with the peculiar reserve of his friend, entreated an explanation; but the only answer returned by Bernard, after replenishing his goblet, was "god bless you my boy—here's pleasant dreams" He drank again, was silent and withdrew.

Satisfied with the lively pleasantry of the salutation, Alfonso once more courted that repose from which he had recently been disturbed.

It was their practice too to eat breakfast together The countenance of Bernard, as he entered in the morning,

still preserved, though in a less degree, the gravity which marked it the evening before. Alfonso endeavored to give a pleasant turn to conversation. He mentioned one or two ludicrous incidents which had occurred at the mess-table in the absence of his friend. "By the bye, Bernard," said he, "the marquis dined with us to-day. He was quite witty—full of spirits, and all that agreeable humor for which he is extolled. Story after story, anecdote upon anecdote, he measured out in such pleasing variety, as to engross the attention of the whole table. Never was he more agreeable; —charmed alike by the retentiveness of his memory, and the happy novelty of his invention, with reluctance I quitted his society. By the way, he mentioned an anecdote of general T———: you know him, Bernard—the french minister at Madrid. What a brutal and degenerate mind must he inherit, who would outrage the prerogative of a husband, by the exercise of flagellation, and delight in the blood and tears of a female whose unhappy destiny should have associated her with a monster equally conspicuous in the moral world, for depravity in the annals of revolution, as in the physical for that grimy foliage which besets his countenance:—well has he been designated by the appellation of don Whiskerando———"

"You surprize me," cried Bernard—"if this should be the character of T———, I forever disown him as a countryman."

"It is but too true," replied Alfonso, "and I am assured that his unhappy wife unable longer to endure the treatment of her husband, and in order to avoid a death too often menaced, has been compelled to flee the sanctuary, formed by god and nature for the felicity of her tender sex, with no other prospect of a subsi-

tence than what she can hope from the votaries of fashion, in the disposal of fringe, brocade, and ribbon, at a *boutique* in the capital——"

"Monster!" exclaimed Bernard, and again relapsed into his reverie.

More and more at a loss to account for so singular an alteration in the spirits of his friend, and unable to repress his increasing curiosity, Alfonso insisted upon a knowledge of the uneasiness which preyed upon his spirits.

"Nothing of consequence." cried Bernard.

"If of no consequence," rejoined Alfonso, "why hesitate to allay my suspicions—if of too great moment for my ear, as I begin to apprehend, I shall desist from farther intreaty—but not surely to feel the less uneasiness, Bernard, for this breach of confidence between us, and for your personal safety——"

"Good god," exclaimed Bernard, "and can Alfonso think thus meanly of his friend! nothing has occurred in the smallest to involve my personal safety—but something to beget a strange enthusiasm in my sentiments, and to create a tumult in my mind which I fear you are little likely to suppress. I entered your quarters last night determined to communicate what had happened; but I felt ashamed to own what I had no resolution to abandon; and I quitted you in the hope of sleeping away a scheme, I had planned to execute, or fall in the attempt. The day dawned, and my resolution was still unshaken. I meditated upon my pillow; and the genius of dreams hovered o'er me in my sleep to allure me, not from my plan, but to direct me in its operation. I suspected you would smile at my conceit, or throw obstacles in my way, and I was resolved to abuse your confidence rather than expose my

foible to your ridicule or to be thwarted in my views. You have detected me ; and because I have been guilty of assaulting that friendship, I am so anxious to cherish, you shall be at full liberty to laugh at my expense. Listen then, and without interruption ; but seek not to estrange me from my purpose, romantick as you may call it. It is a scheme, Alfonso, wild and chimerical; of much delicacy in its operation, and replete with danger—calculated to affect every future moment of my life, and upon whose issue my future happiness greatly depends. Suddenly resolved, it is not the less irrevocable. It stole upon me uncourted, unpremeditated ; laid under contribution were all the affections, and as the chaos of the mind subsided, it alone was left the undisputed passion of my breast.

"You may remember," continued Bernard, "to have heard the name of Mariana?——"

"What!" interrupted Alfonso ; "do you allude to the daughter of the marquis de Cassa Calvo, who is soon to take the veil?"

"The same," rejoined Bernard, "she who all Arragon so justly pities—the obdurate heart of whose father all abhor.—Last night I heard her story for the first time:—It roused every latent sentiment of my breast and in a moment I resolved to espouse her cause, to free her from engagements loathsome to her soul, and by restoring to the world a jewel so formed to please and to adorn, secure the plaudits of an approving conscience. Her tale is short but full of interest.——

"The character and the affluence of the marquis, amply illustrate what chicane and industry can accomplish —In his youth he embarked for the island of Cuba, a needy adventurer, without family, destitute of friends, and poorly clad. His father a plodding mechanick

Gallicia, was barely capable of affording to an only son the rudiments of his mother tongue, the principles of arithmetick and a short period of instruction in the art of writing. As a child he discovered a ready apprehension, he even passed amid the circle of his father's acquaintance as a lad of promising merit. The boy was certainly assiduous in application to the little he was taught, and by dint of perseverance soon excelled in penmanship.

"On his arrival at Havanna, he experienced the advantage of this talent. A planter took him by the hand —a man deficient in every thing but wealth; who possessed extensive plantations without constitution to enjoy, or a relation to inherit them; reaping immense crops without ascertaining their annual amount, unless from entire dependance upon the honesty of his ill-fed slaves, and the notches upon a perennial bamboo; whose increase of number, with the addition of a massy crucifix, had by this time well nigh filled the bed-chamber of its asthmatick occupant. Such was the man who first employed the young adventurer, nor had the latter much cause to regret the adoption of such a master. True, his patience and fortitude were long put to a severe trial; many a year had he to support the caprice of a disposition soured by illness, and habituated to all the arbitrary controul to which abject slavery inures the mind; but persevering in every effort to please, he was in the end successful to outlive the privations of dependance and his benefactor. On his employer's death, to the exception of one or two trifling legacies, he found himself in the full possession of all his property, real and personal, to the amount of *one million of dollars*.

"The moment he had consigned the ashes of his benefactor to the grave, and the short period of mourning

to which he was subtle enough to conform, had expired; away were thrown the sable ensigns of assumed sorrow, along with that outward show of frugal economy which had been the distinguished characteristick of his parsimonious predecessor. On each of his plantations were erected forthwith a commodious dwelling; and having purchased a magnificent mansion in Havanna, he fitted it up in a style of unrivalled splendor. Wealth is ever a sufficient introduction to the first circle of society; and the once needy and indigent gallician in the prime of life, found himself courted by all who had pretensions to what the capricious world denominates *taste* and *fashion*. But unsatisfied with the unqualified estimation in which he was held by the inhabitants of the island, he became ambitious of more extended patronage, and sighing for something beyond the approbation of a colony, he resolved to revisit the capital of the spanish empire. Every relative he had were already gone. The idle tattling of a gossiping parent was now hushed in the silence of the tomb, and no trace of kindred left to blur the *entree* of the nabob to the follies and dissipation of a courtly circle. His introduction to the throne was thus unattended with difficulty; nor was he displeased with the reception with which royalty marked his presentation.

"It has been affirmed with justice, that the 'end of ambition becomes a means:' and having run riot for a while amid the giddy scenes of pleasure—avarice, the predominant passion of his mind, fanned the embers of yet wealthier accumulation. He was, indeed, fascinated with dissipation; but surmounting the barriers to its attainment with such an easy stride, it was difficult to forget the value of gold and he had yet to lose sight of a scrupulous attention to the price of his enjoy-

ment. The government of Cuba becoming vacant at this period, he remembered the splendor and emolument of the office, and as it was usually a prelude to a title, his enamored fancy fired every nerve to secure the nomination. Low cunning and finesse, with a seasonable application of his purse, procured the appointment, and he returned to that spot, so recently quitted, as marquis de Cassa Calvo, with the rank of captain-general, and governor of the island of Cuba and its dependencies.

"Thus clothed with supreme authority, now conversant in colonial trade, and the perquisites of his office, he was no way scrupulous in the multiplication of *douceurs*. The abuses and wanton confiscations of this mercenary wretch are to be found in the records of the Moro; whose dungeons echoed long with the sighs of the unhappy victims of his persecution.

"Having filled the situation for the usual period, his recal was an happy tiding to the island; and he returned to Spain with no insignificant appendage to courtly parade. His fortune was now double to what it was; and having learned, amid the routine of office, to spend his money with a better grace, he began to drink deeply of the intoxicating pleasures of Madrid. In the progress of time he had the good fortune to succeed in his addresses to a lady more celebrated for her beauty than private fortune; the blandishments of her charms and family connexion were all her pretentions. The marquis was affluent, he was yet enslaved by avarice: but his ambition outrun this insatiable desire in order to enoble his issue with that blood of which he was destitute himself. The marchioness realized the expectations of all conversant with the amiable disposition of her heart, and her husband not the least

of the number. She proved an excellent wife, and by a happy art of indulging the whims and caprices of her lord, succeeded in retaining his affections, and giving a better polish to the manners he imported from a west-indian climate. For four years he enjoyed the blessings of an amiable companion, an exemplary mother—the luxury of one real friend! they had but one child. In this girl was centered every hope; but alas! it was soon to lose the protection of one who might have saved it from the misery which awaited it.

"The death of the marchioness was a deep wound to the happiness of the marquis. He felt it with all the poignancy of deep affliction, and well he might. In this inestimable woman he found the value of real friendship; with her it vanished, and once more he became the victim of his unruly passions. Substantial as was his grief, it had to boast of no lengthened duration: it soon subsided amid the scenes of dissipation which he entered. After a series of years, in which he impaired his constitution, and lowered himself in the estimation of the virtuous, he formed the vain and unnatural project of retrieving his lost reputation by an interested match for his daughter. Mariana had grown up in loveliness, and all the amiable accomplishments of her departed mother. He therefore resolved to take advantage of the publick estimation of his child, and to sacrifice her happiness on the altar of his own lawless ambition. Don Raymond is one of those gadflies which feed upon the foibles of society—continually busied in the scent of calumny—flying from house to house for fresh materials of slanderous enterprize, in order to serve up the corrupted game he has been pursuing—hated, yet courted; detested by every one, yet wel-

comed wherever he goes. Destitute of principle or honor, Raymond has no recommendation beyond the advantage of birth and overgrown riches. Yet such was the husband selected by her father for the lovely Mariana. Raymond met his intended bride, and was satisfied with her *points*, as he styled them in his phraseology. Proposals were offered corresponding to the views of the marquis, and the mariage contract finally settled and drawn up. Poor Mariana was ignorant of the plot. She had seen Raymond only to abhor him. His vile principles were no secret, and she had often spurned his attention with disgust before she was called upon to receive him as a husband. The whole circle of her acquaintance pealed with the approaching nuptials prior to her own knowledge of the plot in embryo. Already was she pitied before she was sensible how much she needed compassion. Every one deplored the misery of the bride ere she knew she had a lover. Guess then her astonishment when she became acquainted with the report! unable to reconcile to her belief the proposals which were intimated by her father, she ingenuously confessed her abhorrence of her suitor. Alas! she knew not what it was to irritate a brutal parent. The marquis equally confounded at an opposition he never suspected, first assured himself of the reality of her objection to portray, to the frantick Mariana, the shocking deformities of her father's mind. She prayed, she kneeled and wept, conjured him to remember how she loved, how obedient she had been to his former commands, and concluded in a strain of pathetick eloquence, an affecting appeal to his compassion. Unavailing were her efforts, neither pity nor tenderness were the inmates of his bosom. In place of operating in her favor, it made him

only the more exasperated—destitute of feeling himself. he was callous to the feelings of others. Habituated to controul, the opposition of his daughter was rank rebellion against the ordinances of god and of man. He recognized the relation between a parent and his offspring; but it was in the light of that long exploded doctrine which subsisted in the darker ages; and he quitted the presence of his distracted child, leaving to her the option either to marry Raymond, or to be immured for life in the convent of St. Clare!

"For the first time Mariana began to experience, with poignant severity the loss of her dead mother. Her remembrance of her was faint; but she was no stranger to her recorded virtues. Without a friend to advise, or in whom to confide, she sunk under the wretched despondency of her situation; and for one entire month she never quitted her bed, consumed by a dangerous fever which seemed to baffle all medical skill.

"The marquis made daily inquiries after her health. As her disorder increased his heart would admit degrees of pulsation—remorse we cannot call it. As her fever abated so his agitation subsided; but no indication of tenderness soothed her convalescence. His sentiments remained unshaken, and she survived a dangerous illness to be once more tortured with his hateful commands.

"Poor Mariana, driven to the sad alternative of a cloister, or an abhorred alliance, began seriously to reflect upon the conduct she should pursue. To disobey her father would rob her of the fascinating charms of a society she had every requisite to adorn; but that society was, alas! unenviable with the conditions annexed. Vanity would whisper the varied pleasures of a life of

gaiety, her claims to admiration, and the thousands she would enslave by the effulgence of her charms. 'Love,' exclaimed Dissipation, 'how ridiculous!—he is your husband tis true, but, lud, what is a husband?—a silly toy! fit only to protect you against insult; but unfit to share those charms which thousands may envy him—some participate.' Chastity shuddered at the brink which innocence was upon. Every passion of the human mind passed in review. The whole catalogue of good and bad was opened to her inspection: each as they invited happiness or misery, stood arrayed in perfect order and separate distinction. Now had she perused the world in all its forms. She paused, and shut the book, to become an involuntary exile from its contents!"

Bernard heaved a deep sigh as he mentioned the resolution of the unhappy Mariana, and fixing his eye upon Alfonso's, seemed to ask whether he was animated with sentiments similar to his own. Alfonso inquired whether the release of Mariana was the object he had in view?

"Exactly so," he exclaimed, "that is my resolve—I shall try though I sacrifice my life in the attempt."—Observing a smile on the countenance of Alfonso, he blushed; but it was the blush of conscious integrity. "By heavens," he continued, "you may smile, call my project romantick, or rivalling the knight-errantry of the hero of La Mancha—but you shall not wean me from a purpose, the foundation of which is humanity, the accomplishment reputable, and whose failure cannot be dishonor——"

"You mistake me, Bernard," cried Alfonso, "I cannot censure a laudable enterprize, but what is the object you have in view—what your motives?"

"Motives!" exclaimed Bernard, "is the tale you have heard no motive!" your feelings must be formed of different materials from what I had imagined: should you not commiserate the unhappy case of Mariana?"

"I do commiserate," said Alfonso, "but how ameliorate her situation——"

"By relieving her," rejoined Bernard.

"What next!" exclaimed Alfonso, "where place your fair dulcenea after delivering her from the convent?"

Bernard paused—"In truth," said he, "you confuse me now, my friend. But why should I conceal my heart from Alfonso! I love her—yes; strange and incredible though it be, I love her whom I never saw! Listen to the scheme, and should you approve it, aid me with your counsel, but do not imagine you can dissuade me from the pursuit. I shall endeavor to affect an interview or at least convey to Mariana a knowledge of my attachment and my commiseration for her hapless condition—tell her who and what I am—paint in every lively color the sincerity of an honorable passion—dwell upon the privations of the conventual, the cheerless uniformity of monastick life, the futility of ascetick virtues, and the criminality attached to a voluntary desertion of the social duties—contrast the gloomy prospect which awaits a renunciation of the world, with the charms of social intercourse, the soft blandishments of congenial sentiment, and the perpetual felicity of mutual attachment. Such is the outline of the argument I intend to use. In such a cause, and for such an object it were impossible to convey to you in minute detail all I would urge; but when I set me down to breathe forth my soul to Ma-

riana, my pen will be eloquence itself. This done, should she decline my offer, I shall then, but not till then, shall I endeavor to forget her. If, on the other hand, she should listen to my proposals, instantly I quit the regiment, and abandoning the profession of arms, retire to my paternal cottage, rich in the possession of a wife I do not despair to love.

"Last night I was told she was present at our march into Saragossa, and that stationed at the window with her from whom I learned this incident, she recognized us two, inquired our names and lavish with encomiums, praised our soldier-like appearance. Of you, Alfonso, I am informed she was particularly attentive. There was something nobly characteristick in your deportment, something peculiarly interesting in your physiognomy, which she confessed she had seldom witnessed. Never before did I listen to the commendations of my friend without grateful satisfaction, and without feeling an inward pride at a compliment so flattering to the choice of my affections: but this expression coming home to the heart at a period when it was not itself, at the moment when heated by the tumultuous disorder of soft piercing emotions, the green streaks of suspicious love broke wildly in. For the first time was I envious of the encomiums heaped upon my friend. In my delirium I even hated you—yes, maddened by jealousy, I was base enough to curse Alfonso!"

Alfonso though he could not reconcile to himself the novelty of so eccentrick a passion was by no means hostile to the project. He esteemed Bernard: it was a mutual sentiment, and he was ever ready to lose his life in any cause his friend embarked. That which now engrossed the attention of Bernard was singular

enough; but he knew his incorruptible honor, and he was satisfied his intentions toward Mariana were truly so. They separated for the morning in the duty of the regiment, Alfonso promising to digest Bernard's plan and to offer any new suggestions which might occur to him at their next private interview.

CHAPTER IV.

The history of Alfonso's early life having little or no connexion with the transactions already detailed, we used the freedom of suppressing it for a while, in order to introduce it with more perspicuity and less interruption to the general thread of the narrative. Even Bernard, great as was the friendship, so long and so mutually subsisting between them, had yet to learn it. There were some particulars which even Alfonso himself could not explain; and though he had no secret which he feared to repose in the heart of so tried a friend, yet was he anxious to treat as little upon the subject as was consistent with their mutual confidence, in the hope, however faint that hope, of discovering at no remote period some clue to unravel the mystery of his birth. An adventure, however, fraught with the most perplexing doubts, occurred in the course of this day (we mean the day of Bernard's confession) which no longer admitting of his wonted reserve, and standing in much need of advice, he resolved to impart to Bernard every incident connected with himself.

Passing the mess-room shortly after parting with Bernard, he was attracted by an unusual noise which induced him to ascend and inquire into the cause. A number of his brother officers, among whom he discovered Bernard, formed a circle round a figure whose odd gestures and fantastick appearance invited his curiosity. The instant he was observed, the circle was thrown open, himself hurried into the throng and placed by the side of the party-colored hero of their merriment. Displeased at this rude interference he protested against it with a warmth uncommon to his disposition. This only added to the general mirth, and the consequences might have proven unpleasant but for the interference of Bernard. "Pooh," exclaimed he, "it is what all of us have submitted to. Surely Alfonso will not interrupt the general harmony—all of us have partaken of the ceremony—each one has had his fortune told, and why should he murmur at his turn."

"Is that all," cried Alfonso, resuming his wonted composure, "I am ashamed my ignorance should have betrayed me into error. Mr. Necromancer proceed; but be sure to give me a good fortune or give me none."

Having seated himself upon a tripod designed with painted characters to coincide with the unique costume of its owner, Alfonso waited in perfect indifference the commencement of the ceremony.

"Look me full in the face," cried the necromancer in broken spanish.

Alfonso did as he was desired; nor could he resist a smile at the affected astonishment, and fanciful penetration depicted upon the features of the mountebank. At length he proceeded in a solemn, measured, voice to repeat what all around imagined the usual cant and phra-

seology of such impostors; but in a moment to overturn the incredulity of Alfonso, paralize his frame, and fill his soul with awful consternation. That voice! that language! those features too! all were familiar to his wondering senses. "Gracious god!" exclaimed he, inwardly, "am I not a far distant wanderer from my native country, changed from youth to manhood? Secret as the grave have I been—none here have knowledge who or what I am!—what then art thou, mysterious man, who, by the incantations of thy magick spell, spreads wide the volume of my life! whose occult science, soaring beyond the contingency of the future, penetrates the mansion of the soul to read the record of the past!" He paused, yet wished to speak—he must be heard—he wished for more; but dared not ask. The magician read the agitation of his mind, and practising upon the credulous perplexity he had created, entreated his composure, but peremptorily demanded silence. It was indeed difficult for Alfonso to dissemble, in the perturbed state of his mind occasioned by what he had seen and heard; but he succeeded and without creating any farther notice, than a burst of laughter from his comrades, when they heard the mountebank pronounce his countenance void of intelligence, he succeeded in effecting his retreat, with every syllable indelibly imprinted on his mind.

Bernard followed close upon his heels, and both reached Alfonso's apartment at the same instant. They entered, and Alfonso having locked the door threw himself upon his bed exhausted by the wild tumult of his thoughts.

"What is the matter—speak, Alfonso!" exclaimed Bernard—he was silent; but the contracted brow, and

bewildered vividness of his eye betrayed the delirium of his mind.

"'Tis he!" vociferated Alfonso, as he grasped the handle of his sword—"unlock the door and let the demon pass——"

"Who, what?" cried Bernard, who began to suspect he was deranged in his intellects.

"And canst thou not see him?—look—there the fiend stands—I see him still—there—he aims a poignard at my breast."

Confirmed in his suspicion, Bernard forcibly detained him in his bed, from which he was springing with his sword already drawn. After a short pause, he became less intranquil, and seizing the hand of his friend, exclaimed, "Oh! Bernard, did you know all, you would cease to wonder at my perturbation. None of you, I hope, understood the language of the necromancer?"

"None!" cried the astonished Bernard—"was his jargon intelligible to you?"

"Too well I understood it. Sit down and you'll be satisfied.

"You may remember that after having fixed me upon his tripod, he commanded me to look him in the face—I did so, and smiled at what I too precipitately imagined to be the conceited foolery of such impostors. Soon was I undeceived. The past transactions of my youth were told—my native language, long unheard, now sounded its sweet accents in my ear;—petrified by a shock so sudden, I scrutinized his countenance, left no feature unobserved; every lineament was familiar to my wondering eyes—but I knew him not. Securely masked in the habiliments of his art, and in the ravages of impairing time, I was confirmed that I had seen the man without the power of recollecting when or where.

He called me by my real name—mentioned many anecdotes of my boyish years, and finished with a clue to the unravelment of my mysterious birth."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Bernard.

"Tis too true."——

"But wherefore," interrupted Bernard, "did you ask no more?"

"I was commanded to avoid the suspicion of the by-standers, and to preserve his secret until I should pursue the directions which he gave me."

"And what were these?"

"To petition for leave of absence, and set out instantly for ——, where I should meet a person whose description he gave, that would reward my pains."

"And dont you intend to follow his instructions," cried Bernard.

"I do," replied Alfonso. "I have heard enough to rouse my curiosity—the worst I'll brave rather than neglect his instructions. Let me enjoin you, Bernard, to preserve my secret in my absence. Permit me also to recommend circumspection in your plans, regarding Mariana, until my return. You cannot succeed alone: it may be that I shall prove an useful agent in your success"

"Both!" rejoined Bernard, "you may confide to my discretion; but, Alfonso, how should we expect confidence where none is due? what secret have I to which you are not privy? my whole soul is open to you, and yet you have one thus interesting in which I have no share."

"I understand you," interrupted Alfonso. "Listen then to a tale you will find full of mystery and confusion. I give it you, however, as I know it myself. The per-

plexity in which it is involved must be an apology for my long and unpardonable silence."

THE HISTORY OF ALFONSO.

Whether I was born in wedlock, or whether I am the offspring of an illegitimate intercourse, I have yet to learn. Ignorant of the authors of my being, I have only to hope that the promise of the magician, or by whatever appellation you shall choose to name him, may be realized. Morad of Belgrade, who undertook the protection of my infancy, and superintended my education, though not opulent of himself, was somehow enabled to provide me with every requisite which money could procure; and I must do him the justice to affirm, that my education was not neglected. Habituated to the practice of a kind, indulgent, and affectionate protection, I was attached to Morad and his wife by every tie of filial love. Hailing each by the endearing appellation of father and mother, I long regarded them as such, without once admitting a supposition to the contrary. They never checked the uniform epithets of my juvenile years; and I grew up to cherish as a reality what I was in time to ascertain as no more than a cruel mockery.

Never shall that day be obliterated from my memory! I was yet a youth, and some boyish minds might have been dazzled with the shadow of distant affluence and ennobled birth; but in mine the undeviating affec-

tion, and fond caresses of my foster parents were obstacles insurmountable. They lived a life of retirement; but surrounded by children of my own years, no desire, no amusement but was mine. Without children themselves I had long been the exclusive sharer of their partiality—the only object of their mutual care. Beloved, and loving, we separated with equal pain. I was torn from the habitation of my childish follies, the scene of all my innocent amusements, and the tender protection of my imbecile years; they from the darling of their hearts, from a child which second nature had inured to them as a blessing granted by the peculiar interposition of heaven. Twas a distressing scene. Painful as it was to my unripened feelings, it was more, twas still more painful to them.

The evening was mild, and the vernal breeze which agitated the surrounding foliage, invited the inhabitant of the cottage to taste its fragrance on the lawn after the declension of a sultry sun. I had just returned fatigued, from the gambols in which I had been mixing with my juvenile associates, and seated on the bench beside my parents, was satisfying a keen appetite with a feast of dates and new drawn milk, when a stranger rode up and presented a letter to the good old man, muttering an indistinct sentence which I did not, nor cared I to understand. All three walked into the house, while I, unsuspicious of the credentials of the unknown, finished my repast and planning, while I eat some new species of innocent amusement. My young mind, yet undisturbed with care, sought only to beguile the hours from play. I well remember the veriest allotments assigned for the ensuing morn, and my little heart fluttered with the expectances of to-morrow—alas! that morrow was the period to existing felicity, to usher in the troubles and

concerns of life, and to begin the vicissitudes of my wayward fortune. Scarcely was the last date washed down, the bowl still hanging at the lip, when my foster parents running from the house, grasped me in their arms and rent the air with sobs and lamentations. Unable to account for the sudden change, and almost suffocated with their mutual embrace, I remained, awhile, the passive instrument of their undivided affliction. Exhausted by excessive grief, both unconsciously sunk upon the bench leaving me a wondering spectator of the passing scene. Application to that quarter was in vain, and my curiosity turned toward the unknown. He was standing in sullen silence, with his back resting against the trunk of a majestick chesnut, seemingly unmoved by the distress he witnessed. To him I applied for the cause, but the only answer was an indifferent shrug, and a still more hideous scowl upon his already terrifying visage. My soul shrunk back within me as I contemplated the hateful form which now presented itself. Little expecting it was me he sought, I regarded him as the engine of tyrannical oppression, come to drag my aged parents to a prison. On my knees I supplicated his compassion, and grasping his giant limbs in the fervency of appeal, the monster kicked me from him as a sprawling insect.

Too soon I knew the condition into which I was plunged. For the first time I learned that those who had nourished my infancy, and guided me along the slippery paths I had trodden, were no kindred of mine. A foundling, abandoned by an unnatural mother, they pitied my hapless fate, adopted me as their son, and bore to me those duties which profligacy denied. Ten years had seen me the inmate of their peaceful cottage. Ten annual suns that cottage blessed. 'Twas the anniver-

sary of that day which gave me to their embraces—that very morn in heaven's chancery, was recorded their annual obligations of protection—that very morn our holy prophet had received their daily blessing for so sweet a solace to their declining years; and was it to be the last! The damned messenger of evil stood before me! O! that my unlucky destiny should shut the door against my return in Turkey—yes, good old Morad, I would seek thee once again, and by my presence give thy wife and thee full ten years longer being. I wept, I sobbed, I was frantick. The monster who stood near me had a huge scimitar by his side. Already my imagination saw it stained with blood; and regarding me as the destined victim of a remorseless assassin, I flew for refuge into the arms of my hoary protector. This transaction was in the vicinity of Belgrade, where lived the honest Morad.

I was only ten years old when this happened. At an age thus tender was I torn from all I venerated, to be hurried away from the scenes of every former bliss. A second time to be thrown destitute upon the world.

Lashed behind my conductor, we rode through an unfrequented country; the ensuing evening, and the following day, we were still pursuing our journey stopping only for a change of horses and refreshment. My conductor preserved an uniform silence; nor was I much inclined to provoke explanations from one whose appearance was enough to create alarm. The moon had just peeped above the horizon as we entered atween the cliffs of a rugged mountain. Wild and desolate as was the country through which he carried me, the scenery of the past was unequalled by the dreary waste which now surrounded us. The deep and hollow caverns, the dismal excavations from convulsed na-

ture, on either side, re-echoed in appalling fear the clattering of the horses' feet, and the moon beams playing upon the shaggy brushwood of thin uneven surface, seemed to animate each rustling briar, likening the tinged object to some visionary phantom. Even my conductor, emblem of undaunted villany as he was, discovered symptoms of uneasiness. Such a situation is the touchstone of a depraved mind. The good man may fear the attack of a relentless bandit; but the heart stained with impurities feels sensations of another cast. The sum total of its enormities flush convicted on the memory, the guilty catalogue fastens on his mind, self-accusation stings the conscience with the venom of remorse, and a belief of supernatural agency, draws the strayed culprit to his god again! I heard him utter a short orison to his prophet—he prayed *forgiveness*, and as the word ALLA burst from his repentant lips, a bullet, fired from adjoining thicket, brought him to the ground! The horse, frantick at the flash, flew forward at full speed, carrying me along with him unable to direct his course, till a second shot broke the leg of the unruly animal. He plunged and snorted, but soon fell in the agony of his mangled limb. I struggled hard to free myself from the saddle, in the hope of concealing myself from the ruffians; but pinioned and bruised by the horse, I lay incapable of exertion until I was released by my pursuers. Abandoning myself to the idea of inevitable destruction, I swooned away in the gripe of those who now were masters of my life. But I was not long suffered to remain insensible to what was going forward. The moment it was ascertained I was more frightened than injured they kindly anointed the bruise, with a lotion they possessed, and seating me behind one of them upon a fresh horse, we gallop-

ed forward with full speed. I had escaped one alarm to be precipitated into another; but the solicitude discovered by my present foe for the safety of my person, considerably abated my former fears. I was not without considerable apprehensions for the issue of the adventure; but in consideration of my youth, and the cheering expressions by which they sought to animate my dejected spirits as we traversed the winding mazes of the mountains, my alarm had pretty well subsided by the time we reached the end of our journey. It was near the break of day when we arrived in front of the platform of an extensive fortification. The sentinels from the outworks hailed us as we approached; and having passed the countersign along the ramparts within, the words "all's well" reverberated from the different towers, to the gate where the draw-bridge opened to us admission. I was conducted through a deep enfilade, whose echoes to the din and bustle of the soldiery from within, assured me of the strength and magnitude of the fortress. This enfilade was crowded with all sorts of warlike instruments, defended from without by a double gate charged with chevaux-de-frise. It was not to appearance, however, the principal passage to the garrison; it seemed rather, from the few soldiers we met, to be a private one leading to the apartments of the governor whither it at length conducted us. Hitherto I had no opportunity of examining particularly the appearance of my guides. They wore the uniforms of our turkish spahis, but whether I was in the hands of the rebellious Oglou (as I knew not the quarter of the country we were in) was impossible to guess. A gloomy silence, unbroken but by a cheering assurance of my safety, and some few inquiries after my condition, had been preserved throughout our journey.

We entered a saloon through whose lofty windows the sun was just peeping to discover the rich drapery and splendid magnificence of a princely palace. Here I was left to the solitary indulgence of reflections indescribable. I looked back upon the peaceful habitation I had been torn from. I compared its simple furniture with the grandeur which encompassed me. I thought of the produce of the last two short days and wondered what was in reserve. Supplied with every necessary I required, I needed nothing in the peaceful dwelling from whence I had been torn. Happy as the day was long, I had to learn what it was to be unfortunate, satisfied in all respects with those to whom I had been habituated—treated with kindness and affection, I was unambitious of exalted birth. What had now befallen me? but two short days and I had a father and a mother to cherish, to protect, and whose delight it was to make me ever happy—I was now an orphan—before the dawn of puberty completely destitute; kidnapped by a miscreant and thus providentially rescued from his odious purposes! I was young and my suspicions of danger corresponded with the bent of my years. Easily excited, alarm subsided with the terrors of the moment. The country I had travelled through; the mysterious object of my journey, and the doubtful character of those in whose hands my life was now at stake, were enough to excite alarm. But contrasted with the magnificence which surrounded me, and estimating character by the affluence of the individual, my unsuspecting mind began to experience a degree of composure which finally quieted all apprehension.

My conductor now entered in earnest conversation with one whose majestick air, and splendid costume, bespoke the governor of the faithful.

"Behold, most mighty," cried the former, as they approached, "the boy whose life our holy prophet destined us to save!"

"Tis well" replied the other, throwing himself into a sofa, "Hassan leave us for awhile. Come to me my son—unbosom your distress—tell me all you know—fear no danger at our hands, I'll protect you, and should I have the power, I'll give you back in safety to your family."

My young heart expanded—fear instantly died away in the security which these benign accents inspired. I approached him without dread. I wept, but they were tears of joy. His arms were thrown open to receive me; he caressed me, intreated me to banish all fear and all reserve, and seating me by his side, again asked me to tell him all I knew.

My story was short. I dwelt upon no incident in particular. It was told in all the simplicity of youth; but it possessed sufficient interest to awaken the sympathy of him who listened. He was deeply affected by the *naïveté* of the narration. A tear forced a passage from the reluctant eyelid, and as if struggling to conceal a weakness he was loath to own, he retired from the sofa to the farthest window in the saloon.

A sumptuous breakfast was now served up, to which he condescended to invite me. My appetite was keen, as you may well believe, and I saw before me variety in profusion to consult in order to please a less indifferent palate. The conversation chiefly regarded myself. He expressed his astonishment at the progress made in my education, and spoke much of the merit of of those who had superintended my studies. The turkish language was what I had commonly used: but a tolerable latin and greek scholar, I knew the scythian,

sclavonian, and persian, with a little german. French, italian, nor spanish I knew nothing of; but, those he told me were easily acquired.

"From all I can learn," he added, "there is some impenetrable mystery attending your birth. I think you said that those who had charge of you lived secluded from the world, enjoying but a confined circle of acquaintance. That without parade and far from the indications of affluence, they seemed ever to have abundance at their control, indulging you in whatever superfluity your fancy chose to demand. Much mystery is in the tale you have given; but I shall bestow some pains in order to detect the truth. In the mean time, Ahmed, for such is the name I had hitherto known, you must remain with us. I cannot suffer you," he continued, "to roam abroad the unfriended orphan. From this moment I adopt you as my son. I have the power and the inclination to protect you. With me you will be safe from the pursuit of those who too evidently seek your life; in me recover the lost caresses of an abandoned father. Having rescued you from one danger, I shall screen you from another. We may yet discover your real parents; in the meanwhile be it my province to perform the duties their profligacy denies you. What says my boy? can you confide in my assurances—will you trust to my protection and remain with me? A soldier by profession, I'll teach you the art of war; and by inuring you to the fatigue and hardships of a campaign, animate your bosom with that love of glory which victorious intrepidity inspires."

Charmed by the picture he drew, my young mind was kindled with an ambitious ardor hitherto untasted. His words spoke musick to my soul. In a moment imagination already crowned me with the laurels of

victory, and the din of arms marshalled up the proud trophies of glorious warfare. At that instant the kettle-drum and bugle resounded from below, and seemed to blazon forth the fancied conquest I had gained—my heart beat in rapturous ecstacy, and I vaulted from my seat to seize the banner of my fallen foe!

"Come, my boy," cried he, remarking the transport painted on my countenance, "let us review those troops already renowned in war, whose victorious career have often driven back the flower of the russian army; and at whose veteran discipline even the divan trembles and feels dismayed."

I had now an opportunity of ascertaining the strength of a fortress in which nature and art united to render impregnable. Situated upon an eminence whose base was formed of one solid mass, flanked all around by rugged rocks, and commanding the full view of an incredible extent of country. The walls and battlements, towering to the clouds, were lined with heavy ordnance; and garrisoned by some thousands of troops, whose discipline and martial appearance seemed to bid defiance to an host. I have the power to give you but an imperfect outline of those feelings which possessed my breast at that moment. Such a spectacle I had never witnessed: dreamt I never had of half the glory of a soldier's life. Now was I amid the destructive implements of war—their clashing sound vibrated in pleasing ecstasy; and as the tear of joy trembled on the eyelid, I swore eternal wedlock to a life of arms! Inchanted with all I saw, I was already a self-created hero. Completely infected with a military mania, boy as I was, my young heart panted for an opportunity of signalizing myself by some exploit of desperate enterprize. Delighted with the eager curiosity which directed my inquisitiveness

in all things, the governor discovered a solicitude for my instruction which told me he was not displeased at my remarks. The parade having finished, he led me back to the saloon in which we breakfasted, and pointing out the chamber allotted for me, he left me to seek that repose of which he was sure I stood in much need, while he issued out the orders of the day.

The apartments assigned to me was an epitome of the splendor of the first. Indeed the style and magnificence of the whole was unequalled by any thing I had ever witnessed. From my school-books I had formed an idea of the palace of a prince; and the pages of juvenile romance had introduced me to the imaginary wiles of inchantment. What I now beheld seemed to outstrip the one, and to complete the reality of the other. Criterion there were none, because there were no comparison between idea and reality. Was it a dream? and the rich drapery of all, the fantasy of the imagination? the impalpable substance of aërial mockery? no such thing. It was no vision—all was identity. Thus puzzling my brain with unavailing reflections exhausted nature closed my eyes in sleep.

Towards noon I was awoke by a female slave who came to attend me in obedience to her lord. Too young to inhale the transports from the rays of beauty, I yet only estimated the sex by the soft caresses of affection. But now, Bernard, (continued Alfonso) methinks I see the bewitching form that fondled me in her arms—bore me to the perfumed bath, and with her own hands dressed me in a suit of embroidered purple. Back I look upon the past, and find the record on the memory true. How sweet the expressive countenance—that eye how soft and languishing! that hair in jetty ringlets artlessly playing on a bosom of unrivalled symme-

try ! that angelick person ! that fascinating *negligee* of attire ! o, exquisite perfection !—look where it stands, the master-piece of heaven !——"

"Admirable, o admirable !" exclaimed Bernard, interrupting him with affected peals of laughter. "Hear him, ye gods !—is this the stoick Alfonso ?—where are now his sombre passions !—he could smile at my description of a mistress and lo !——"

"The comparison is odious," cried Alfonso, a little peevish : "you painted the charms of a mistress you never saw. I use no art—borrow nothing adventitious from report—my eyes perused the original ; and the unimpaired faculty of memory yields up the pristine colors to description."

Bernard with a sigh owned this was true ; and Alfonso perceiving he had touched the sensibility of his friend, was sorry for the wanton attack of which he had been guilty. Affecting disregard to the wound he had given, he continued :—

She was indeed what I have described, but to me a second mother. From that moment I began to feel the loss of her who had hitherto performed to me those duties, and to cease even to think I ever had a parent. For the first fortnight of my residence in the fortress, she was the companion of my nights ; she feared the frequent challenging of the sentinels upon the ramparts, and the clamorous bustling of the patroles as they performed their circuit beneath my window, would disturb my slumbers and produce alarm. Many a time have I awoke to hear her sigh and to find my cheek bedewed by tears she sought to shed unseen. Often would I inquire into the cause of her grief, cling round her neck and kiss away the tear. Still she sighed, and wept, till soothed by my caresses, or touched by my distre-

she became herself again. Twas long ere I could wrest from her the secret of her despondency—long before I could discover the most remote cause of her unhappiness. It is a distressing tale, but I must reserve it for a future hour. Unhappy Fatima! for such was the name of her whose image no time can efface.

CHAPTER V.

THE HISTORY OF ALFONSO CONTINUED.

"I shall not fatigue you," continued Alfonso, "with every minute transaction which occurred at the fortress of ——. I resided there upwards of six years, and could dwell with enthusiasm upon the various exploits of the troops, the superior mind and exalted virtues of their leader; but much as is the pleasure I should experience, I must for the present postpone a narrative of particulars." Day after day passed by and the first month ended as it began. The same attachment which had marked my first reception from the chief, was still perceptible. It seemed indeed to augment rather than to diminish. My affection for my protector increased with our acquaintance. His disposition ever mild and mile, never for a moment reminded me of despondency.

Prompt to decide, and accustomed to command, there glowed undaunted firmness in his countenance: unincumbered in his address, and possessing the utmost placability in his manners, he had the happy art of putting diffidence at ease. Daily acquiring a knowledge in the art of war, my military ardor kept pace with the progress of instruction. Nor was this the only science taught me by the erudite Kyoprili. Master of the various languages of Europe: versed in the history of each surrounding nation: skilled in arms: profound as a politician—he seemed to delight in the idea of making me equal to himself. He was pleased to regard me as a lad of genius, and, when unimployed in the publick duties of his office, my progress in the attainment of his vast lore was the acceptation which he sought.

Six years (as I have already said, continued Alfonso) had almost elapsed when one morning Kyoprili summoned me to his library. He commenced by telling he had received a dispatch from Constantinople which announced an immediate russian war. "The enemy," said he, "have sounded the tocsin, and his army is already on its march. This fortress commands the principal pass on our frontiers. Against us tis expected will be directed their principal operations, and I am commanded to prepare for their attack. An augmentation to our force I look for every day. An army of reserve will speedily encamp behind the mountains in our rear, to be commanded by the captain pacha in person, under whose immediate orders I am to serve. My time will now be much engrossed. I must attend in person the construction of redoubts on either wing, in order to animate the workmen, and give a spur to industry. You, my son, will have sufficient imployment in the several duties of your station—as my aid-de-camp your leisure

hours will be few. I am resolved to make you a soldier, and you must submit to the hardships of the profession:—would I could make you great! but can I doubt your courage? no, no! I know thee better."——He paused for a moment and then proceeded:

"You must bid adieu to all idea of discovering the origin of your birth. I have not been inactive as you shall hear; but all my inquiries have terminated without avail: do not despond however. Be your parents ennobled, or obscure among the slaves of Turkey, behold in me one who will befriend you through life. I have no children to inherit the princely fortune which belongs to me; you I have adopted, loved, and cherished as my own begotten, you shall be my heir. I have strong suspicions you were born to rank and affluence, so that should you ever ascertain the family from which you spring, the education I have given you and the fortune I shall leave you will not lessen Ahmed in the estimation of those who abandoned him in his youth to the dagger of an hired assassin!

"*An hired* assassin sir!" I exclaimed, shuddering as I spoke.

"Ay, truly so," he continued, "but be yourself the judge. It is now time I should acquaint you with the substance of my inquiries. They are briefly thus: Hassan who brought you hither, was returning from a distant post charged with dispatches, when he heard the report of the piece which brought your conductor to the ground. Instantly he clapped spurs to his horse, but before he reached the spot, another bullet wounded yours. Our party were unperceived in their approach, and the ambushed robber, to secure his prey, leapt from the thicket to the road and fell beneath the sure aim of Hassan's scimitar. The wound was mortal; but the repent-

ing villain lived to tell his story. It seems, that meeting where you last stopped for refreshment, your conductor, from the compunctions of remorse, and unwilling to execute, by his own hand, the murder he was charged with, tendered him the office with a bribe. The bribe he owned was large; but not the price of the artful knave, who looking for an ampler sum, treacherously waylaid you both sanguine in his hope that the purse of him already in pay was weightier by half than that tendered. His argument was truly good, and apart from the malignant villainy of the transaction, admirable logick. Hassan, moved by the attrocious deed, flung the wretch yet living down the steep precipice on which he stood, to seek his brother there, and pushed on to your protection.——

"Such was the story of Hassan," continued Kyopril. "I saw you; and much as I have witnessed of the enormities of man, I had not looked into the catalogue of his crimes for such an instance of untamed ferocity. Could I look on you a helpless unsuspicious infant, abandoned by those on whom nature had imposed her weightiest charge, without feeling an interest in your fate—without a desire to mitigate the misfortunes which assailed you! I boast of no sentiment uncommon to humanity. I beheld what was enough to inspire horror, and to call forth succor to the helpless.—In a word, I heard your little tale of distress with a heart open to compassion; and without arrogating to myself superior merit, you became the unbought object of my adoption; this was not all. True I beheld no chance of ever being called upon to render up an account of my charge; but in order to satisfy my doubts as well as to have the power (however faint the prospect of restoring you to your family if contrary to suspicion I found them worthy of such a son) I dis-

patched a confidential slave to retrace the route you had travelled in quest of farther particulars.

"On reaching Belgrade every inquiry was instituted to discover your Morad. His description was imperfect, and it was long before he made any progress in his inquiry. Happening by accident, however, to meet an old acquaintance well known in that quarter—him he employed to assist his research, and in the end their joint efforts were successful. They discovered the dwelling; but it was without an inhabitant—the furniture was still there, and from other circumstances presented to their view, not long deserted. Here they paused for sometime and were at length departing without a chance of information when they discovered clots of blood upon the floor. Their suspicions were strong; they inquired in the neighborhood, what had become of the old inhabitants of the cottage—no one knew; all were ignorant of their sudden disappearance. They never went much abroad—seldom visiting their neighbors they had as yet not been missed, and all agreed in the suspicion of foul play.

"Such has been the unsuccessful efforts I have made to satisfy my curiosity. I have much cause to believe those suspicions too well founded, and you may thank Hassan who saved you from a similar fate. All is now past; you have out grown the remembrance of your misfortune, and should smile on calamity which is now no more. There is a similarity, Ahmed, in your history and mine, a strong coincidence of early life. I once knew a father and a mother. An only sister and myself were the pledges of their bliss and tender solicitude. Beautiful and 'chaste as the icicle that curdled by the frost from purest snow.' The young Morgiana already commenced to put forth such lovely blos-

soms as promised to be the admiration of our sex, and the envy of her own. Georgia, so famed for female beauty, owned not so fair a flower. It was that country that gave us birth—for awhile we flourished like two sprightly plants; but alas! to a barbarous usage, pluckt from the nutricious bosom of her luxuriant nursery, and planted in an ungeniak soil, we were soon exposed to every rude attack. O my country! how unlike a fond and doating mother, thus to yield up thy tender young a prey to unhallowed cupidity! The little innocent nestling in the bosom, smiles unconscious of its helpless state; and the fond parent, transported with the ecstatick feelings it inspires, half stifles it in the luxury of embrace. Come but the shade of danger in its way, her frantick soul views the distant object on her cherub's head—distressed, half frantick, she steps atween her child and death, often to fall a victim to her own imaginary fears. But thou, unnatural Georgia! pollutes thy altars with the inhuman sacrifice—thy sons to complete the ranks of foreign armies—thy daughters to fill the harams of capricious mussulmen! yes, devoted to the barbarous custom of the country, we were sold to be led captive into Turkey!

On our arrival at Constantinople, Morgiana was torn from my sight, which augmented the terrors of captivity. While she remained the companion of my journey, a portion of felicity was mine; but, when the moment of separation arrived, the cup of happiness seemed to vanish from my lips. Sleep fled from my pillow, my wonted appetite decreased, I became pale, sickly and emaciated. The ruddy glow of health was exchanged for the sallow complexion of those who became masters of my liberty; and ere a week had deprived me of my sister, excessive grief effected what the narcotick

root had not produced in years. I was then above your age when first I saw you. But distress is not long-lived in years so tender. Kind usage and insinuating manners win the infant heart. Every bauble takes the eye, and each kind look delights the fancy; attend but to his playful tricks, and every moment steals upon his affection. Caressed, indulged, and flattered, I began to fancy there was nothing I could ask amiss; and soon became precisely what they wished. In a short time I was placed at a military school, where, dazzled by the splendor of a soldier's armor, I soon forgot the simplicity of a shepherd's life. You may have heard that the principal officers of the turkish government, and the flower of her army, are composed of the sons of christians; but reared from childhood in the faith of Mahomet, they become as true believers as if they had entered the world with the koran in their hands.

Having travelled through the usual routine of study, and acquired the theory of military science, I was pronounced capable of a command. Appointed an officer in the Janissaries, I rose rapidly to preferment; and before I had attained my five-and-twentieth year, I was selected for the important trust of envoy extraordinary to the court of Versailles. Close application to my studies had made me a proficient in the several languages of Europe. A taste for science I had cultivated, alike, the art of war and the principles of government. Although our country be so far behind her contemporary nations, political economy I had not overlooked. Ambition fired my young and ardent mind. I panted for renown—but, to lead an army to the field was not the summit of my wishes—no; nor to return crowned with the laurels of victory! unsatisfied even with renown in arms, my foolish heart sighed after a

seat in the supreme council of the empire.

"The particular object of my mission to Versailles was for the purpose of consolidating our commercial relations with France. I succeeded beyond my hopes, and the treaty I concluded experienced the gratitude of my country and the distinguished approbation of the divan. It returned, ratified, from Constantinople, accompanied by an aigrette of immense value, and a complimentary note from Selim himself, enclosing my commission as a general officer in the service.

"My reception at the french court was flattering to my feelings. I was courted by all the nobility, and peculiarly distinguished by men of letters. Here I became the intimate of D'Alembert the Newton of France, the facetious Voltaire, the refined Mirabeau, the *sylvian** bishop of Autun, the metaphysical Condorcet—in fine, my acquaintance was unlimited, and the civilities heaped upon me unbounded. But the young Rosalvo was the man who pleased me above all. His education had been in camps; but he was unrivalled in the polish of the courtier. His society had a singular attraction—from the moment of our first interview we became inseperable. I recognized, at once, abilities and a firmness of mind which in no other person had I observed before. Endowed with an enviable temper of endless vivacity—his erudition, unfettered by the measured stiffness of the pedant, was perspicuous in the most trifling expression of his thoughts.

"The object of my mission to Versailles having been thus successful in its completion, I was ordered to repair to Vienna invested with similar powers. This

* We have preserved the idiom of the original. Tallyrand is not less remarkable as a politician than for the deformity of his person, and his fashionable colloquial powers.

mission was different from the last. The harmony so long subsisting between us and the germanick empire began to assume symptoms of a rash interference with our foreign relations; and to a reconciliation of our dispute was the charge entrusted to me by the divan. On my arrival at Vienna I found the task assigned to me difficult beyond my expectation. Party spirit run high; and the discipline of his troops, but just returned from actual service, increased the demands of the emperor. At length after an arduous struggle of persevering intrigue against the insidious cunning and overbearing *hauteur* of the german character, I succeeded in an entire restoration of peace and neutrality.

"I had now been some years absent from Turkey, and I petitioned to be recalled, which was promised the moment my successor should be nominated. It was during the interval of that promise, and the arrival of my successor, that I was once more to enjoy the pleasure of Rosalvo's society. Pleasure did I say? alas! there is something so incongruous in the human mind that the warmest attachments are often the source of melancholy catastrophe. Friendship is exquisite in her sensations; allied to the sweetest touches of sensibility, she seems to borrow delicacy from an origin celestial; but as if the mutability of human pleasures were too transient to nourish the elicit warmth, it is apt to freeze at the threshold of the heart. No attachment was ever more sincere; no friendship so perfect as was ours. We parted with the feelings of reluctant hearts, to meet once more with all the revived sentiment of former intercourse.

"Rosalvo had been recently married: this intelligence he kept secret until he surprised me with an introduction to the partner of his bed. Beautiful as an

autumnal morn the effulgence of her charms dazzled the beholder, like the sun-beams in meridian splendor. As the wife of my friend I was prepared to admire: but bewitching in herself, I was the instantaneous object of inchantment. At that moment I could have envied another the possession of such a jewel, In her arms she fondled a little babe; twas a lovely boy, the sweet pledge of their mutual love. The little urchin as if sensible to the effects of its mother's charms, was anxious to kiss me for her sake. The eagerness with which it solicited my notice was ecstasy to Rosalvo; and the mother wept with kindred sensibility as she tendered me the little innocent—I took it from her, kissed its little cheek, and clasped it to my bosom. Its mother, envious of my caresses, would take it from me; but portentous omen! it cried, shrunk back, and fixing its little eyes on mine, I thought I read distraction in its tender breast, as if it had a fatal presentment of what was soon to follow!

"That day I dined with Rosalvo: the next produced my successor with orders for my immediate return, in consequence of some unexpected urgency in the affairs of state. Now did I regret my recal;—I saw a second separation from the friend of my heart with lively pain, and could have wished to retract my petition; but it was now too late. That day I dined with Rosalvo for the last time—we were again alone; again happy in the society of each other. Towards evening he was unexpectedly called away from table. The cause of his sudden departure was unknown to his wife: he said it was of consequence, but that he would soon be back—he quitted us, and I never saw him more!

"I sat late in hopes of his return; but he came not

and about to take my leave, I jocularly inquired if she had any commands for Turkey? She paused, and heaving a deep sigh, exclaimed,

"Yes; I have been wishing to speak of Turkey; but often as the anxious thought entwined itself round my tongue my lips denied me utterance."

"There was a mixture of grief and expectation visible in her countenance which rivetted my attention; but I must refrain from the particulars of her interesting narrative; suffice it, for the present, that in the wife of Rosalvo I found my sister!

"On my return to my hotel I perceived the nature of my dispatches would admit of no delay. The sultan, anxious to afford a new proof of the estimation in which he held the services I had performed my country, in addition to the appointment of aga of the spahis, had mentioned an early day to invest me in the seraglio with the imperial order of the crescent. It was painful to be thus early separated from one I loved so tenderly. The early companion of my youth, my beloved Morgiana had been restored to me—I saw her wedded to him I esteemed above all mankind; and I could have consumed days in the society of my best loved friends: I was resolved, however, to rejoin them at no distant period. I was sufficiently affluent; and I began to regard the honors which awaited me at Constantinople as adequate to the quiet of every vain desire. Ah! better had it been could I have resolved to share the peaceful happiness which presented itself at Vienna; but infected by the poison of ambition I was permitted to see my error only when too late!

"My reception by my sovereign corresponded with the avowal already manifested in my dispatch, and the

wealth and honors heaped upon me exceeded all anticipation. Elevated to the highest dignity, and promoted to the rank of second in command of the turkish army, I fancied myself only not imperial because I was a subject. My country, freed from the recent alarm of foreign war, and no apprehension of civil broils, I was preparing to quit the bustling scenes which agitate the soldier and the statesman; and laying aside for awhile the splendor of my station, I was in the fullest expectation of enjoying uninterruptedly an happy intercourse with those I loved. Scarcely were my plans digested and prepared to exchange the toils of business for the promised tranquillity in view; when a letter reached me from my sister which was to derange all and to dash the cup of happiness from my gripe. A female attendant, instigated by some dark and demonial artifice, had ingeniously practised upon the suspicious disposition of Rosalvo. She had witnessed the transports of a long lost sister, the fond caresses of an affectionate brother—she might not, indeed, have partaken of the conversation which led to the discovery we had made, but seizing instant possession of the ambiguous embrace, sought no further elucidation, and giving a criminal coloring to unsuspicious innocence, cruelly denounced me as the destroyer of his happiness. O monstrous conception!—the seducer of his wife! So artfully had the Abigail insinuated her suspicions, so keenly had she practised upon the jealous appetite of Rosalvo, that, fired with the certain pollution of his bed, in the first transport of his passion, he burst into the apartment of his wife and child, and, with the fatal instrument of his vengeance, first put a period to what he imagined the fruit of an adulterous

commerce ; and the steel yet reeking with the blood of his infant son, was plunged into the bosom of its frenzied mother !

" Her letter apprized me she yet lived ; but that the agonies of her mind for the inhuman butchery of her child, and the fatal direction of her own wound, were hurrying her rapidly to the grave Alive to the cruel imputations which might tarnish her name, when no longer in her power to vindicate her honor, she entreated my immediate presence to stay the foul tongue of calumny ; and that she might once more clasp me in her arms before she bade adieu to a world, whose un merited severity she had long withstood, to fall a more matured sacrifice to overwhelming calamity. I had already obtained the imperial sanction for my absence, and without acquainting any one of my route I hastened to her assistance.

" What was my consternation when I reached Vienna !, Rosalvo had vanished. No one had heard of the catastrophe which had happened ; every one in amazement at the sudden departure of his family ! Again I perused the letter of my sister ; it was her own hand writing, and bore but too ample marks of authenticity. But the intelligence I received from my successor in office confirmed me in the belief of all my doubts. That morning of my departure Rosalvo sought me at his hotel : his tongue faltered as he pronounced my name ; the agitation of his frame, the wild incoherence of his deportment, and the convulsive inquietude, so visible on his countenance, alarmed the ambassador. He entreated the cause of his confusion, and begged him to be explicit ; but he could ascertain nothing from the strange conduct of Rosalvo, whose last words at parting were impre-

cations against my damned villany. For awhile I knew not what course to pursue—was my sister dead or was she still languishing in painful solicitude for my arrival? all was mystery and cruel suspense. I knew not whither to turn to discover her abode. No one possessed the information I sought. Methought I beheld Morgiana in the last agonies of despair, without friend to succor or to soothe her pangs, wasting life away—now pitying the restless destiny of her infant babe, herself unpitied, now calling despondingly upon her absent brother to take a last farewel! The distressing image drove me near to madness; but, alas! I knew not what to do. Days were consumed in fruitless inquires. I could never account for the sudden disappearance of her assassin, the secrecy with which he perpetrated the murder, or the measures he adopted so perfectly to conceal the victims of his brutality. From every circumstance I could collect, there remained no doubt of guilt, and I became used to the belief of the unhappy end of my sister; but never, no, never to pardon the deliberate villany of her murderer. I concluded to hunt him through the world; and, placing an oath in heaven, I swore to redeem it only by his blood. For years I was occupied in the pursuit from court to court; but after travelling all Europe, I was at length obliged to return without tracing him to his haunt."

CHAPTER VI.

"Such," continued Alfonso, "was the outline of the history of Kyoprili. If there be a motive to reconcile me to my own destiny the singular incidents of his have been contributive. Born to affluence he was not:—family distinction, nor hereditary honors were among the appendages of his patrimony. Behold a peasant boy, sacrificed to an unhallowed custom and sold a slave, rise up from merit and native genius to the first station in a foreign land! There were undoubtedly some affinity in the early incidents of his life and mine; and I began to encourage the dazzling hope which awaited me; but such a prospect was promoted by the idle vanity of a child: true, they were calculated to absorb my grief; but as I advanced in years darker shades of mystery hung around my birth, to run me headlong into scenes of anamalous fortune.

"The event of this day, Bernard, has made a strong impression—I cannot banish from my sight the physiognomy of the unknown. What he is, whence he comes, or wherefore the purport of his ambiguous commission, is past my apprehension.—To personal fear am I a stranger: the peculiar agitation of my spirits, however, create a ferment in my mind; but it is less from any hope of resolving perplexities, or proving instrumental

to the discovery of what I am, than from the teasing remembrance of a voice still vibrating in my ear to fret and torture me with appalling dread.

"Memory is too imperfect to direct my curiosity. That I have seen the mysterious stranger is beyond all controversy; but when or where is past the compass of my recollection. That he knew me is equally true; and the agitation of my spirits assuredly forebode some event for which I am not prepared. But what have I to dread? I can trace every past transaction of my life—pry into the inmost recesses of my soul:. no turpitude, no stain of ignominy, no vicious propensity is there to blur the character I hold. I may have been less active than many in the beneficent virtues because I was less wealthy; but where I have not diffused happiness to my fellow creatures I feel an inward satisfaction in the knowledge of being chargeable with the misfortunes of none. Listen then to the conclusion of my story; and I hasten to perform the injunctions of the magician."——

The parental affection of Kyoprili continued undiminished: next to the duties attached to the office he held his delight was training me in the knowledge of arms, and to instruct me in the rudiments of general science. Already have I intimated the extensive knowledge he possessed. I was taught the spanish the french, the italian and the english languages. His mind was the seat of learning itself:—stored with a rich profusion of general acquirements he had the happy art of imparting it to the apprehension of his pupil. I have no cause to regret a formal course of academical studies: he approved himself the laborious tutor in the rudiments of knowledge, and the refined instructor of enlarged capacity: what progress I have made I owe to him; what deficiency I discover is attributable to my own folly and neglect.

It would savor of pedantry were I to carry you through the course of our studies; and of vanity to lead you into our frequent skirmishes with the advanced posts of the enemy. Much as I should desire to portray the skill and intrepidity of Kyoprili, having always fought by his side, I cannot dwell upon the greatness of his soul without the appearance of egotism. The war was protracted without a decided advantage to either of the contending powers. Though often sought for on our part no general action had yet taken place. The russians were not to be decoyed into a trial of strength: but this apparent shyness was, in reality, less the result of fear than the practice of deliberate artifice on the part of the enemy. At length he succeeded in putting us from our guard, in the end to exhibit an instance of more wanton barbarity than which the page of history describes no parallel!

In vain had Kyoprili endeavored to induce a general action—in vain we looked for a raising of the siege—in vain a period to the war The mysterious policy of the divan would neither listen to remonstrances for a sufficient reinforcement that should have given us the power of driving the enemy back from our frontier; or yet condescend to the first overtures of negociation. Thus were we at bay in an inglorious warfare. The troops became languid from inaction: discontent pervaded the garrison, and the whole vigilance of Kyoprili was required to preserve the authority of his command. From what cause I know not; it might be from a rash confidence in our strength; but more probably from the corruption of the subaltern, commanding the advanced piquet, the enemy made one bold attempt, under cover of the night, and

succeeded in carrying by storm a fortress* we had supposed impregnable against the congregated force of Europe! The enemy, galled with the resistance he encountered, and the loss he sustained, which by his own account exceeded ten thousand men) without breathing over the sanguinary butchery, put thirty thousand of our brave army to the sword!

Kyoprili fell by my side at the moment of defeat, and I had barely time to save myself by flight through the subterraneous passage, whose key was fortunately in my possession. Having gained a distance from the awful scene, I began to resolve upon the route I should pursue. While under the protection of Kyoprili I had nothing to dread; but now that I was deprived of his counsel and patronage, I knew not how to act. With only a few xaffiers in my pocket—without one friend on earth—what was I to do? I beheld myself an outcast tossed upon a desert world, pluckt of all the honors which imagination had described in colors so bewitching; blighted were all the trophies which idea won, and blasted all my hope of glory. I paused, then raved; alternate sighs and curses drove me to distraction—maddened with despair I had resolved to play the roman patriot on the plains of Philippi, when at the instant, Mustapha, the captain pacha of the sultan's forces, suddenly appeared before me. My hopes revived at the sight of Kyoprili's friend. I was known to him, and the circumstance of my adoption promised a warm reception; but he spurned me from him as a loathsome reptile!

* We have looked over the turkish history for a fortress as this is described, but in vain. The sacking of Ismail assuredly bears some affinity; but neither time nor circumstance seems to confirm the fact.

"Avaunt thou accursed of Allah!" he exclaimed,—"thou little better than thy coward of a friend! Is it from me thou lookest for protection? Behold a soldier! unlike the man thou prizest—this heart beats high with honor, loyalty and untarnished fame. He whom thou hast served hath basely sold a victorious army and his country for a mercenary recompense. Hence from my sight, thou infidel! thy presence is pollution to the faithful! Hence, with this scimitar to thy treacherous master; it will remind him of what he was, and tell him what he is! I received it as the gift of a brave, honorable, and valued friend. Long have I worn it for his sake; but now that I discover the traitor in the donor, I render back his own—begone, begone!——"

Vain was the effort to reply. I wished to vindicate the honor of my injured friend; but the savage, furious at my stay, aimed a deadly blow. Happily I retreated back in time, and grasping my sword, flew on to the attack, we closed in combat; and though indignant at the double outrage against my friend and life, I resolved to preserve my temper, and be avenged! For awhile the issue was in doubtful certainty A lucky blow, however, disarmed my antagonist; and I beheld the imperious Mustapha a kneeling supplicant for mercy!

The day was now far spent, and the wound of the captain pacha requiring assistance, I was anxious to contribute to his relief. From his side I tore the imperial sash, and having devoted it for the purpose of a bandage to stem the blood which flowed from his wound we moved forward to a neighboring cottage. Seated by the fire was a person whom Mustapha soon recognized as an officer in the janissaries; but who

fearful of the enemy, had cast aside his uniform to assume the habit of a peasant. By his recommendation we were persuaded to do the like; and an elderly female, whom the janissary called from an adjoining apartment, soon procured for us a disguise. Great god! what were the tumults of my mind when, on nearer scrutiny, I discovered in the person of the janissary the ruffian who long since bore me from the peaceful residence of Morad! His towering eye and fiend-like physiognomy struck me at first sight. For awhile I gave way to the assurance of Hassan to Kyoprili, and in the belief that he had dispatched him I doubted the correctness of my memory; but I was soon convinced the wretch still lived.

"You seem thoughtful Omar," said Mustapha after a short pause. "O damned Kyoprili!—be not displeased sweet friend," continued he, as he darted a significant scowl upon me.

I can give you no idea of the horror which possessed me at this sudden change in the comportment of the ungrateful villain. Unguarded, though he was, I had all the disposition to glut my vengeance with his instant annihilation; but the reply of Omar kept in check the desire of chastising his temerity.

"Yes, seignior," said Omar, "I just now remember what a narrow escape I once had in this neighborhood——"

"Ah, what was that?" demanded Mustapha.

"You may remember," continued Omar, "the uproar in the seraglio at the escape of Zaide?"

"That is an old story," interrupted Mustapha.

"It is," replied Omar, "but old, though it be, the sultan has yet to forget his passion for that favorite

slave. He had a son by her, as your highness may recollect——"

"She bore it yet an infant with her, if I remember well," cried Mustapha, again interrupting him.

"Even so seignior," added Omar, "but it did not die as reported."

"Indeed! what then?"

"By some means the grand vizier discovered the route of Zaide; but not till she was fairly beyond the reach of pursuit. Belgrade, a nearer town, was the last place he traced her to, and then it was full nine moons after her escape from the seraglio. Here she stopt but one day, and with her soon passed the frontiers of Turkey. Eight times from that period had the pious carmelite performed his weary pilgrimage to Mecca, when the vizier learned from his spies that a person of suspicious character resided in the neighborhood of Belgrade, supported by the bountiful donations of some unknown hand. The information added that he had a child, whose appearance denoted something far beyond a peasant boy. But to be brief: it was soon discovered that the supposed father, by name Morad, had originally come from Hungary—that the boy was placed under his protection by a stranger—that with it he had given him a bountiful supply of gold; and was then in the receipt of annual donations for its ample support. A diamond too was found in the possession of Morad, which being produced was instantly recognized by the vizier: and thus the son of Zaide, and the defender of the faithful, was at length discovered! Fearful that a knowledge of this event might reach the sultan's ears, and determined that the issue of some other slave should maintain pretension to the diadem, I was hurried to Belgrade with a mandate for the boy, nd charged on pain of death to dispatch it in secret.

"The boy was given me with much reluctance. I bore it from its home, and was proceeding toward Constantinople to execute my orders on the road in the completest manner. But as ill-luck would have it, passing near to this in the dead of night, I was beset by robbers. A bullet brought me from my horse, and is now lodged in this thigh. Another shot killed my charge; and after smarting all night with my wounds, I had the good fortune to escape from my pursuers to receive the reward I merited. It was the recollection of that circumstance, seignior, which occupied my thoughts I'm not, however, displeased at what happened, since it was the means of placing me under your highness' command. A company in the janissaries was the recompense awarded me for my services, and, in consideration of the vizier's favor, I shall ever hold myself bound to obey his mandates, and allow me to add those also of your Highness."

Indeed! thought I, then let me be prepared! The pride of Mustapha was humbled; and I guessed the bloody purpose he would encompass. Like a base coward he could fawn and play the sycophant when on the brink of danger; but the peril over, and seated on the summit of concerted safety, him would he sacrifice whose generous soul had rescued him from jeopardy. Such in fact was the foul scheme he contemplated to wipe away the infamy of humiliated greatness. They retired in silent interchange of signs, leaving me in expectation of the worst of purposes.

The story of Omar placed before me an interesting picture of my destiny. What! was I then the son of the mighty Selim—presumptive heir to the Ottoman throne? The very idea kindled up my blood to deeds of more than mortal valor. But my mother—this un-

heard of Zaide! a sigh burst from my anguished heart as I remembered that she also, like her son, was a victim to misfortune! no matter, thought I to myself, perhaps I shall live to sooth her wearied pangs, and while clasping to my heart the author of my existence learn the eventful tidings of my birth. Come what may, I have an arm to wield with skill the scimitar of Kyoprili.

That scimitar, Bernard, continued Alfonso, is the same you have so often prized. From that period it has been the constant companion of my travels—no pearl, however costly, would have been a richer present. I had no memento of my friend; and, though I needed none to preserve the recollection of one so near my heart, I blessed it as a precious relict, the only substantial token of Kyoprili's fame; but tarnished by unseemly hands, and sent to me by heaven as the safeguard of its glorious achievements.

Mustapha and his companion having finished their private conversation, now returned to where I was. Omar began to scrutinize my figure with renewed curiosity; but confiding in the alteration of my features, and the period that intervened our last meeting, I pretended not to observe his anxiety, affecting to be solicitous for the wound of Mustapha. I inquired if it were possible to procure professional aid; added that I was fearful of its necessity, and requested his permission to go in search of advice. Mustapha treated my proposal with a disdainful frown; resumed his attack upon the honor of Kyoprili, and hinted, in language sufficiently plain, a thirst of revenge for my superiority in combat.

Even this I had presence of mind to endure; but when the villain Omar joined in sarcasm against my friend, and employing threats too in opposition to my

justification, longer forbearance were cowardice; former provocation thirsted for an example; indignation gave way to furious rage—all the venom of heated frenzy rose in arms, and in a moment my scimitar was unsheathed and mantled in his detested body. Mustapha was unarmed, and stood petrified with astonishment as he beheld the reeling carcase of Omar tumble at his feet.

"Stir not, thou base calumniator, thou poltroon pacha! exclaimed I to Mustapha, "or by our holy prophet, I'll make a ghost of thee, to wed your common crimes upon a funeral pile. Behold that son of Zaide, whom yonder bravo sought to pluck from the genealogical tree of Mahomed!" Then turning to the dying villain whom I began to pity:—"enfeebled is that arm which would have palsied mine—fast ebbs that blood which would have drained these veins; repent, and die in peace—freely do *I* pardon, do you, make peace with heaven."

"Art thou the boy I bore from Morad's house?"

"I am!"

"And canst thou forgive me then?" cried the repentant sinner.

"From my soul I do——"

"Thanks—thanks—I die composed—oh! Mahomed—Selim is *not* thy father——Zaide——" he was continuing, but the name died upon his lips, and he expired to leave me in all the uncertainty of half-finished confession. One word more, and perhaps I should have become acquainted with my origin; but I was reserved for farther trials of my fortitude.

Mark the conduct of Mustapha, the puissant captain pacha of the Ottoman empire!

"O! glorious achievement!" cried he, "by heaven it was nobly done! He was a villain, seignior, and yo

have immortalized yourself by a single deed—next to conquering Mustapha, was that of annihilating Omar!"

Oh, but it galls me to the soul, to think that such reptiles should hold the authority of rank in civilized society! The wretch tendered me his hand in congratulation; but I spurned from me the proffered friendship, and left him to the compunctions of his dastard soul. Puzzled as I was to account for his sentiments of the character of Kyoprili, my heart revolted against the idea of explanation. Few had escaped the massacre of —— to tell the tale, and I resolved to appeal to the porte himself, in vindication of our suspected treachery.

The intelligence of the defeat had reached Constantinople before me. The same discreditable tale was believed, and the whole city resounded with the infamy of Kyoprili. The disaster had but recently happened; and though I felt the cruelty of so dishonorable a stain upon our character, still did I look forward with every happy presage to the approaching moment when truth would predominate to re-establish the great name of a fallen hero.

At the hotel where I dined, the affair of —— was the topick of conversation. The party was numerous, and chiefly composed of officers of the janissaries. Every one had his comments, and, save one veteran soldier who betrayed some faint intimacy with my friend, each was the harsher censure of Kyoprili's conduct. Won by the warmth of his apologist, who had become the ridicule of the company, I imprudently espoused his opinion, unwarily announced myself as Kyoprili's aid-de-camp, and declared upon the honor of a soldier that my commander fell by my side bravely opposed to a thousand bayonets. A loud burst of laughter drowned my voice, and unable to restrain the distraction of my feel-

ings, I conceived it prudent to leave the room. This was matter of fresh merriment to the party. To me, indignant as I felt, their conduct was an example highly illustrative of the flimsy tenure of popular opinion.

I was followed by him who espoused our cause. He led the way to a private apartment, and we sat down to enjoy the delightful sociability which flows from an interchange of kindred sentiments. Perceiving I was still irritated at the insult offered to me, he strove to sooth my ruffled spirits by assuring me the party we had quitted was composed of boys, soldiers by profession; but who reared in the lap of indolence, had become mere opiniated coxcombs, untried in military danger.

"You must understand," he continued, "that the affair of —— has been productive of much noise and speculation. Report has made free with your reputation; and I must confess, notwithstanding my knowledge of Kyoprili's patriotism, that even my suspicions were awakened. I have known him long; nor am I hasty in my conclusions. His rapid rise—his character as a statesman, and his renown as a soldier are enough to beget enemies. Kyoprili has many, and though I dared to espouse his cause at a table I usually frequent, believe me my experience of human nature would not warrant me to seek the conviction of a mob. We meet as strangers; but our meeting I esteem most fortunate, because I shall now have the means of learning the real merits of that transaction."

Few sensations are more grateful than those which arise from a spontaneous effusion in favor of an injured friend. I saw Kyoprili accused of a crime the very idea of which would have driven him to madness. I beheld all the proud laurels which his intrepidity had

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won blighted on his tomb, his anguished spirit too, hovering o'er the eternal infamy they bespoke, and while beckoning me to wipe away the foul calumny which disturbed the peaceful mansions of the grave, methought, blazoned on its front, I read—

AHMED YOU OWE THIS TO KYOPRILI!

There was a benignity in the countenance of the stranger which attracted my notice from the first. Having heard his sentiments, I grasped his hands in the transports of grateful joy. I commenced with my earliest infancy, related to him the accident which brought me acquainted with Kyoprili, spoke of his tender care of an unfortunate orphan, dwelt upon his endless virtues, and his greatness of soul! delicacy forbade my mentioning the interview with Mustapha, and I finished with a solemn avowal that he fell by my side.

Scarcely had I finished my short narrative when a group from the table we had left, burst open the apartment where we were, and began to renew the vein of ridicule in which they had been recently so lavish. Such premeditated insult was not to be endured; nor could the persuasion of the stranger restrain the satisfaction I was resolved to seek. Nettled at the severity of my retort, and fancying himself secure, because he was surrounded by many friends, one had the effrontery to lay a cane across my shoulders. This was enough to decide my conduct, and at one blow I severed his head from his shoulders. Appalled at this unlooked for consequence, and guarding against what was in reserve, cowards as they were his companions betook themselves to flight.

The stranger acknowledged the justness of the punishment; but recommended instant flight to avoid the vi-

glance of the police. In the morning through his friendly disposition was I furnished with a letter of recommendation to a military acquaintance at Madrid, and assuming the name of Alfonso, I embarked for Cadiz.

My reception at Madrid by don Enrifli was suitable to what his friend had taught me to expect. He was not opulent; but through his interest I obtained a commission in this corps. This was the last act of Enrifli's kindness: in a few days he fell a sacrifice to a disorder to which he had been a martyr for years. You know the rest.

CHAPTER VII.

Such was the history of Alfonso, such the object of the journey he was undertaking on that night, with the catastrophe of which we commenced this volume. We left him at the Franciscan monastery whither he had been sent charged with a second mission by the duke. He declined the refreshment offered to him by the abbot, and instantly took his leave promising to return within the hour that he might accompany him back to the duke. He was anxious to take Bernard by the hand. They had been separated for longer than was at first contemplated—many important things had taken place in the interval—he had much to say, much to ask. The fortune which began to smile upon him

was new and unexpected—it would delight the ear of his friend ; it would do more—Violante would assist Bernard in his suit with Mariana !

It was an interesting meeting : they had not seen each other for near a month. The cause of their separation we have already announced : both were under peculiar embarrassment when they parted, and each when they met sought the relation of the other's story with impatience. Alfonso had little time to spare, and briefly stated the outline of his adventure, his intended visit to the convent of St. Clare, and his desire to assist Bernard in his plans in that quarter.

Bernard was attentive, and shared in the bright prospect which awaited his friend ; but the idea of deriving the advantage suggested by Alfonso operated very differently in his mind. Peculiar circumstances had intervened their last interview ; these weighed heavily with Bernard ; and he who had formerly accused Alfonso of a want of confidence became the first aggressor. When Alfonso spoke of interceding with Mariana through Violante a deep sigh burst from the bosom of Bernard ; this did not escape the notice of the former ; but there were various cogent motives that Bernard should conceal this secret of his heart.

Already have we said that our aim is the delineation of character rather than a disposition to dwell upon abstract principles, or to moralize upon the bias of human action. We are alive to those frailties incident to man, and we feel inclined to be the apologist for his irregularities ; but though we are less given to censure than desirous to applaud, it shall be our aim also to commit each agent to the moral criticism of our readers. Bernard, in the absence of Alfonso, had succeeded in his

desire of beholding and conversing with Mariana; but he had also beheld Violante—that interview was of fatal consequence;—his heart suddenly divorced its object, and yielding to Violante's charms, unhesitatingly acknowledged itself a slave. In the duke's injunctions to Alfonso he beheld, as he fancied, a dangerous rival; and much as he wished it, his pride revolted at an avowal of his fickle nature. He contrasted the mean and shameless deception he was about to practise with the candor of his friend. To a moment in which he beheld no motive for his suspicions of Alfonso's rivalship, the slightest chance of a barrier to his own hope succeeded to deter the avowal of his passion for Violante. Yet was it vain to be silent upon the transactions of the last month;—to conceal from his friend that he gained admittance to the convent would only quiet a momentary uneasiness; the truth would soon reach his ear, and he should be detected in a base subterfuge.

It were surely, thought Bernard, more honorable to avow all; but then the dread of a successful rival poisoned the ingenuousness he would practise.——"It is "the middle compound character, (says Junius) "which alone is vulnerable. The man who without "courage to avoid a dishonorable action, has feeling "enough to be ashamed of it."——Alfonso became impatient; Bernard wavering and irresolute, half discovered the fever of mind he struggled to hide. As a quietus to his conscience, however, he at length indulged himself with the conceit that the concealment of his passion was an excuseable artifice, and might well enough accord with the other parts of the transactions at the convent. Besides, there was a circumstance connected with these transactions which he was anxious to communicate to Alfonso. It had been productive of

much speculation, and he looked upon the access Alfonso was about to have to the convent as the only means by which he should unravel the truth or fallacy of his conjectures. In order to judge correctly of Bernard's conduct to his friend, let us go back to the period of Alfonso's departure.

Long had he ruminated upon the scheme he should adopt to rescue Mariana from the convent of St. Clare. Baffled had been his prospects even to the chance of seeing her, till at length a grand festival in honor of the tutelary saint was announced. This was a few days previous to Alfonso's return: already had he prepared a letter for the object of his infatuation, and without assigning the motive, he imparted to a brother officer a desire of witnessing the approaching ceremony, and a request that he would accompany him to the convent. The invitation was acceded to, and after drinking pretty freely at the mess, they sallied forth, the one in quest of adventure, the other in the hope of enjoying a sight of those charms which report alone had operated thus powerfully to enslave him.

The unhappy story of Mariana was a common topick in Saragossa. Don Vincent, Bernard's companion, talked much of her on the way to the convent: he had known her intimately, and was lavish in praise of her beauty and accomplishments. Delighted as he was at this additional spur to the eclat which should celebrate the success of his scheme, Bernard was secretly jealous of the warmth of Vincent's eulogy. The ceremony had commenced before they reached the convent. The gloomy silence which prevailed—the crowd of visitors, the solemn musick, and the murmuring vibration of harmonious sound, filled the soul of the impassioned Bernard with indescribable enthusiasm. His

eye wandered over the extended group officiating at the altar; but though in imagination was engraven the likeness of Mariana, she was a perfect stranger to him. Much he wished for information; but fearing to betray his feelings, he was reluctantly compelled to desist. At that moment the musick ceased. The silence of midnight crept through the aisles—suddenly a voice tempered with celestial melody, burst upon his ear. The vast concourse were electrified by the divine minstrel, and the general murmur of awakened ecstasy, half-drowned the master-piece of musick's art. One voice near to Bernard, sighed forth the name of Mariana.

"Tis she!" exclaimed don Vincent. "By heaven tis Mariana!"

As if she had caught the expression, the eyes of the performer were thrown around, and caught those of Bernard. Comparing reality with the portrait already formed by his imagination, he was now persuaded twas so. He would have flown to her, clasped her in his fond embrace, and borne away the prize; but recollecting where he was, he could only feast upon the lovely countenance, which seemed to blush conscious of the confession it bespoke. Rioting amid the transport of his feelings, the ceremony ended before he fancied it had well begun. The nuns and the noviciates now opened a passage to the altar, that those who were disposed might demand the benediction of St. Clare. Now was the moment for him to convey his letter into the hands of Mariana. Don Vincent indignant at the farce, declined to follow; but Bernard was resolved. Mariana stood close to where he knelt. Her hand hung by her side; he felt it! twas openly inviting! and while all around were struck with the singular piety of the soldier, he saw her take unnoticed the paper that should

decide his fate. Elated at this happy presage to his hopes, he rose and measured back his steps; unwilling to retire, yet fearful of creating suspicion by his stay, he knew not what to do. He had succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectations, and prudence should have guided his retreat; but secreting himself within an adjoining aisle, he stood a curious spectator of what would follow.

His letter was couched in appropriate epithet. It breathed the copious purity of his passion, without rising to the language of romance. It began by commiserating her wayward destiny; dwelt upon the privations of a cloister; the immorality of a voluntary abandonment of the duties society demands. His own situation in life was stated to afford a prospect of happiness to one who could dispense with superfluity: concluding with an avowal of his passion, and an offer of his hand.

No one ever applied to St. Clare in vain: and the pious auditory, fraught with cheering consolation, were fast retreating to their several homes. The nuns filed off to their several cloisters. The novices closing the procession, completed the solemn festival of the day. No one remained, save the abbess and an elder nun. Bernard began to fear the indiscretion of which he had been guilty. Retreat he could not without observation; and to remain an eye-witness of their private penance, was a stretch of dishonorable curiosity:—add to this, the character of the abbess was not unknown to him. If report might be credited, she was a woman of an austere, inflexible, and resentful mind To be observed was enough to create suspicion; and armed with the strong power of ecclesiastical tyranny, she might hurl upon his head the terrible vengeance of the Inquisition.

Inconsiderate as was Bernard's delay in accompanying the auditory from the convent, his only crime was that of anxious curiosity; but from his knowledge of the character of the abbess, he felt the danger of his rashness. Suspicion once fixed upon him, the bloodhounds of the holy office would be unkennelled; no retreat were a sanctuary of protection: he would be dragged from his concealment, hurried to instant confinement, thence to the wheel to expiate, in excruciating torments, an imaginary crime. Bernard's inquietude, however, subsided for a moment, and his whole attention called to the dialogue which ensued:

Abbess. ——Did you remark too, Agnes, the unqualified approbation of the auditory while she sung the anthem Francisco composed for my inauguration?

Agnes. I did—nor can I refuse my concurrence in their taste. Her voice is melody itself—her manners pleasing, her features beautiful, her shape majestick—she was destined to shine in——

Abbess. Cease, sister, cease! you are ever taking part against me. Attend my pleasure, my COMMANDS, if you please—recollect the difficulty I have had to detain her in the convent, and my resolution that she shall receive the veil——

Agnes. I was merely accounting for the plaudits of the auditory. I am not ignorant of your determination, nor can you say I have shown the slightest disposition to thwart your wishes.

Abbess. I do not like the prying curiosity of our brother of St. Francis of late——

Agnes. You allude to Miguel?

Abbess. Yes, him I mean. I begin to suspect him, sister. 'Twas but yesterday he repeated his threat of discovering the secret to her relations, if I persisted. I hate Miguel—dont you too, Agnes?

Agnes. Why—to be sure, one should hate——

Abbess. You hesitate! I tell you I hate Miguel as much as I did his predecessor. He would do well to desist. The fool knows me not, nor how easy I o'erthrew the wary Francisco.

Agnes. Ah! poor Francisco——

Abbess. Sister! no more of this. What! am I ever to be the subject of your reproof? Is this the return to the confidence I have condescended to repose in you? Had I not confessed to you the innocence of Francisco, would you have regretted his punishment? Once I liked him well enough, tis true—that liking lasted while he gratified my unruly appetite. True, his favors were the consequence of my deep plotting artifice. Long he resisted the tempting blandishments I strewed before his cold indifference, till at length impatient of restraint I gave a loose to passion; and throwing aside the characteristick modesty of our sex, meanly I descended to be the beggar of his person. I had still the remains of beauty:—shaken were his plighted vows. I beheld him struggle amid the violent contentions of the soul and body; till at length, delirious with the intoxicating fever, he yielded a willing partner of my pleasure.

His was a transient flame—mine perpetual. Reflection brought him back to duty. His visits became less frequent. Still I sought his society until indifference, the unsupportable stigma of our sex, fired me with the passion of revenge. I was piqued, then angry, then wondered how I fancied him. Recollecting he was a friend to Westcote*, for whose cruel neglect I was first

* The Foundling of Belgrade owes its origin to an incident in the memoirs of Charles Westcote, a work by M. D. F. recently translated from the french. Charles in his travels, meets at Paris with a family of the name of Parouty, con-

persuaded to abandon an indulgent husband, and to attempt a brother's life, I hated Francisco; and though he saved my life, because he knew my vices, he became loathsome in my sight. Resolved upon his death, I strove and triumphed! Agnes, remember, you forced this secret from me. Remember your oath, and never speak of FRANCISCO, nor in the lowest whisper breathe in the vacant air the name of WESTCOTE! Let's to our prisoner.

The early part of this dialogue made a deep impression on Bernard; but as it drew to a conclusion, his attention was so awakened with a confused coincidence of past transactions in which he had borne a share, that heedless of the danger of detection he

sisting of M. and madame P. and a brother's wife of the latter. His introduction is novel and interesting; but soon his intimacy with madame P. who is described as a woman of incomparable beauty, but much addicted to intrigue, becomes too offensive to a delicate ear. The ABBESS OF ST. CLARE, was madame Parouty.

Madame B. the sister-in law is upon a visit at their house; she is also decribed as lovely and interesting, without the vices of her relation. Soon after Charles' arrival, she resolves to return to her husband, a gentleman of considerable affluence, residing in the south of France; and the whole party set off for Perpignan accordingly. Towards the close of the journey, the carriage of Charles and madame Parouty breaks down, the postillion having previously missed his way. They are much bruised—see nothing of the other carriage: and here it is where Bernard and his widowed mother saved the life of the supposed madame Westcote. Shortly after their arrival at Perpignan, mons. B. who has an estate in the environs of Saragossa, proposes an excursion to Spain. A variety of interesting incidents are the consequence of this trip. Charles becomes acquainted with Francisco, in whom he at last makes a discovery of dreadful import.

Madame Parouty unable to influence Charles' consent to an elopement, and fancying she had detected a passion to subsist between madame B. and him, forms the horrid idea of charging her brother with the murder of the young Hu-

glided softly toward the speakers, and hid himself behind an image of St. Clare. He had heard, since his residence in Saragossa, of a celebrated abbot of the Franciscan monastery. Francisco was his name. Long famed for piety and unbounded benevolence, whose character had been the theme of unbiassed veneration; but who for an attempt upon the chastity of this same *immaculate* abbess, fell a victim to inquisitorial domination.

The disposition of Bernard was inclined to the serious. Though a soldier and exposed to the ridicule too often exercised by levity and ignorance, piety was among the ingredients of his mind. He

esco. This Huesco is the villain Diego. He has become the paramour of madame P. and in order to second the views of his inamorato, privately leaves the kingdom. Mons. B. is arrested by the Inquisition; but very fortunately the abbot of the Franciscan monastery is *ex officio*, a judge of the holy office. The character of Francisco the then abbot, is enthusiastically dwelt upon. His desire of meliorating the sufferings of mad. B. his fortitude, and impressive avowal of innocence, induce him to inquire more particulary concerning the charge. At length he discovers the diabolical plot, and the retreat of Diego. Mons. B. is consequently acquitted, and madame P. arrested in his stead. She is tried, found guilty of perjury and condemned. He is restored to his family; but finds that his wife, imposed upon by a report of his infidelity, had been induced to enter the convent of St. Clare, and to sign a voluntary renunciation of the world. What is to be done? Charles flies to Francisco, and through his interposition gives madame B. back to a doating husband. The means by which Francisco accomplished this end are a secret to all the world. Not even Miguel his friend and successor is privy to them. The first spreads a report at the Inquisition, that madame Parouty died in her dungeon. He next proposes to her to change condition with madame B. This is complied with, and in a few days she receives the veil. Such is the outline of those memoirs. They abound with incident; but we only cite those parts which will be enough to explain the ambiguity of the Abbess' words.

inherited from an exemplary mother a nice sense of religion, and the conversation to which he was privy excited horror and confusion! often had he listened with rapture to the godlike character of Francisco—often had he been puzzled to account for the sudden change which affected his high, unspotted name; a name than which none in his estimation had ever reached so near the masterpiece of human greatness. Now was the whole mystery unravelled:—Francisco was still great as he had ever been—avowed so to be by the confessed instrument of his destruction. Levelled had been the stupendous edifice of exalted virtue which sheltered and gave succor to the repentant sinner.—What an instance of matchless infamy stood before the eyes of Bernard! he beheld a wretch blackened with remorseless crime, in whose clutches hung the fate of the unhappy Mariana. But what were the horrors of his mind when he discovered in the abbess one whose life was saved through the hospitality and endearing kindness of his mother! Great god! was it possible, thought he, that one so lovely once, could now be the self-convicted, self-approved, author of such detested crimes? alas it was too true. Time had not defaced the remembrance of their acquaintance; nor was the memory cheated with the features now presented to him in full view! "Onward!" he exclaimed within himself "I'll follow too." This night is pregnant with strange conception—I will still pursue the adventure and trust to heaven for a safe deliverance." He hung back until he saw them fairly from the chapel, and then followed at a distance Agnes held a lamp, from whose rays he could distinguish the gloomy passage they pursued. Both preserved silence—the abbess

seemed wrapt up in the resolution of some hellish machination; having proceeded a short distance they stopped to ascertain the cause of an approaching light.

"Imprudent girl" exclaimed the abbess in surprise, "is it you? what calls you abroad at this unseasonable hour? you hesitate—daughter, speak! I charge you——"

"I was only inquiring after the health of sister Beatrice," replied the afrighted noviciate, "she has been worse and I am returning to my repose——"

"'Tis well," cried the abbess with assumed composure, "get thee to bed. But stop," she added after a short pause, "give me your arm, I must speak with you?——"

"Lovely innocent," thought Bernard as he saw her falter at the harsh tone of the superior—was it possible his eyes deceived him? again he looked—"by heaven tis she! I am not deceived—tis Mariana. Had she perused his letter?" he asked himself. The agitation she discovered at the unexpected meeting with the abbess, answered in the affirmative. She appeared more beautiful than the portrait he had drawn; what a happy fellow! thought he—but then again the barrier between them presented itself to rack his desponding mind. "No matter," he cried, "accident may do much, and perhaps upon the issue of this night depends my future prospects." Bernard was correct in supposing the noviciate to be the same whose voice he had heard so much applauded in the chapel, and into whose hands he had put the letter at the altar; but it was Violante, the niece of the duke Aranza, and not Mariana de Cassa Calvo. We shall not pretend to vindicate his hasty conclusions, nor the rashness of avowing his passion, even *Mariana*, without a previous acquaintance. So it

was, however, and we proceed to a developement of the consequences.

The abbess, Agnes, and Violante, proceeded along the gloomy gallery, which terminating in a flight of steps, these they descended and entered an extended vault, from whose top was suspended a lamp which reflected but an indifferent light. In the middle was erected a stately image, at whose pedestal each knelt and crossed herself. The supposed Mariana was placed exactly before her impassioned lover. Recollecting her unhappy destiny, he could not help remarking the steady devotion which inspired her. He thought it curious she should exhibit such perfect calmness and resignation, when he was persuaded her heart abhorred the penance outwardly enjoined. Her piety, however, only augmented his admiration; and he felt the glow of self-approbation, that he should have formed in imagination so perfect a resemblance of her, whose story he first heard to pity then to love her for its sake!

Violante had perused the fatal paper. It was not directed to her in particular, but she recollected the writer's name. She had heard Mariana frequently speak of him in terms of approbation again and again. She devoured its contents; twas a fault she said not to address it. Was he influenced by delicacy in refusing to insert her name? she knew not how to explain the omission; but that it was intended for her she as little doubted, as to fancy twere another that had caught his heart. Her uncle had assured her of her liberty; but when, or how? was the question. It was long in coming, and though she doubted not his good intentions, still her disgust to an ascetick life, and the hatred she bore to the abbess were fearful odds against her personal safety Having secreted in her bosom the paper

that promised her such flattering assistance, she resolved to acknowledge the civility of her lover, and was returning to her cloister to reflect upon the answer she should give, when the abbess met her on the way.

"Violante," said the abbess, rising from her knees, "I am now resolved to have your final answer to the commands of your deceased father—too long already have I dallied with your promises. Speak, are you prepared to accompany Mariana to the altar—what? still hesitating—no matter, I'll grant you one day longer; but remember, to-morrow I shall expect consent. This I swear in presence of our saint—you may retire; Agnes, give her your lamp."

"Violante!" exclaimed Bernard, "and who is Violante? my god, what have I done! she knows my secret and may betray me—no, no, she is too innocent to be so cruel. What a fickle heart is mine! but this moment and Mariana reigned the undisputed tenant of this breast, and now another occupies her place." For a moment he was the sport of the wildest distraction; quick before his eyes flew a rapid succession of half-digested ideas—finally to convince him that he beheld Mariana in the person of Violante, and that she was the real object he adored. For the first time he recollected too, that through extreme caution he had omitted to direct his letter.

Retiring in obedience to the abbess' command, Violante passed near to where Bernard stood concealed. He followed her to the staircase, and sighed unseen into her ear—'TRUST TO THE PROMISES OF A FRIEND. The voice of the abbess now caught his attention and he returned to his former concealment.

Agnes. Have a little patience.

Abbess. Patience, indeed! *Sister*, it shall be so. What can avail the will when the uncle is in the grave?

Agnes. But Aranza lives.

Abbess. I doubt that.

Agnes. How!

Abbess. Because——

Agnes. Because! what? (The agitation of Agnes seeming to denote some horrid suspicions.)

Abbess. I have had my emissaries at work, sister. By St. Francis! he is——is——

Agnes. Murdered!

Abbess. Not exactly so—but Agnes, what ails you? Then suspecting she had gone too far, she added—sister, I was but in jest. Surely, you would not have me harbor such relentless infamy—no, no, Agnes, I was only sporting with the esteem I know you entertain for Aranza. A week has but elapsed since you became the confidant of my secrets; but another! and you'll know me better, to feel too the bounty of my grateful heart. Look to your charge, my dear Agnes, I must begone, the confessor will be impatient for my return." Agnes heaved a heavy sigh, and disappeared.

The eyes of the abbess followed her until she was lost in the mazes of the vault, and the abandoned wretch, as she uttered imprecations against her compassionate confidant, had the effrontery, once more, to bend in supplication before the saint! Now was the moment to practise miracles—now the moment to reach the heart of Jezebel, at the expense of a pardonable piece of pious artifice! Cautiously advancing to the image, he placed himself in the cavity behind, and in sepulchral accents thus addressed the kneeling PROSTITUTE, who, from the confinement of the voice, occasioned by the hollowed metal, fancied supernatural agency at work, and for once perhaps, did supplication flow from the fountain of pure contrition! "Profane

sister, what canst thou expect from me? hast thou not destroyed a faithful servant of thy god, encompassed fratricide, prostituted thy person and quitted a husband's bed. Long have I marked thy corrupt spirit —too long permitted thy abandoned profligacy—registered in heaven's high chancery is the prodigality of thy machinations. True to the record, there thy unnumbered crimes wait the judgment-day! as you expect remission of your sins, depart and sin no more!"

The time, the place, and the occasion, were happily chosen. Superstitious withal, the affirighted abbess convinced it was St. Clare who thus addressed her, sighed out a promise of repentance, and hastened from the awful scene.

About to descend, the false prophet heard the steps of the returning Agnes. Again she kneeled before the saint; but hers were the prayers of a goodly heart! She sought forgiveness, perhaps she needed it; but it was with a contrite spirit. She appealed to the motives for the evidence of her intentions in seeking the confidence of the superior; but confessed an abhorrence of her vices. Called upon the saint to deliver her from this sinful abode; but above all, to step between Aranza and the threatened danger.

Persuaded of this testimony against her implication in the crimes of the abbess, Bernard looked upon Agnes as a proper person to make those inquiries he was anxious to propose. Still, however, he feared a discovery. He had seen too much conventual duplicity to be deceived by appearance. What if Agnes should explain away the mystery of the speaking image? nugatory would prove the impressions he had made; and the wretch who carried along with her a pious certainty of divine intercession, when no longer the dupe of fanciful illusion might exercise untold severity upon her victim,

to avenge indignancy against the self-created bubble. But again the means of escape presented themselves! without the assistance of Agnes he could never trace the labyrinths which surrounded him. This was enough to decide his conduct, and he descended from his concealment to present himself before the astonished nun.

"This is no time," said he, "for explanation. It is sufficient that I am here, and that I am privy to the secrets of your profligate superior. Nay, cease to wonder! lay aside your fears, I am honest, and shall do you no injury. I come to succor the innocent and the oppressed. As one who comes within this denomination, accept the proffered aid. I am a soldier and pledge the rigid law of arms in favor of my honest dealing. Take that hand, good Agnes, it beats in unison with my words. Fear not the abbess; I have worked a dreadful change in her accursed spirit. Say how I can assist you, say how liberate Mariana and Violante from this hated place?"

"Holy virgin!" she replied, "whoe'er thou art, mysterious being, resolve one question, and I'll answer every thing?"

"Propose it," cried Bernard.

"What are the secrets you allege?" she asked.

"None, to implicate you, good Agnes—but of your companion, crimes unnumbered! has she not confessed herself the murderer of the good Francisco?——The veriest prostitute to polute the sacred couch of wedlock, and as the purchase of her lustful appetite turn hangman to a brother—is this sufficient to approve my skill?—but more; what say you to the murder of the duke Aranza?"——

This was the touchstone of her sensibility. "Oh! my husband," she exclaimed, then swooned within his arm

"Her HUSBAND!" cried Bernard, "distracted woman, she knows not what she says; but why this solicitude for the duke? perhaps, thought he, tis some unfortunate victim of youthful *indiscretion* as it is called among the votaries of fashion. "Ah, giddy world," continued Bernard, "what an appetite is thine! . . . . ." You, the disturber of a peaceful family—you, who have played the assassin of virtuous repose—you, the destroyer of virgin innocence! tis to you we put this question. This is the commentary, search your own bosom for the text! we arrogate to ourselves no claim to superior virtue. We have passions like yourself, and regarding them as we do the primeval springs of human action we are willing to palliate and forgive—but can this suffice the pregnant mother of your illicit commerce, bring back the peaceful days of former happiness, touch with pity the enraged parent at his daughter's infamy, wash out the stigma of your child's reproachful birth—or change the inveterate ordinances of society? no, no! this were impossible. To your own breast we commit the unfinished apostrophe of the virtuous Bernard. Look at the situation and pause upon the self-evident materials of his reflections!

"And did she murder him?" inquired Agnes with affecting pathos.

"He yet lives," replied Bernard, "and in safety too I hear. But whence this solicitude for the duke Aranza?"

"Ah! ask not that—was he in danger then? O! answer me!"

"He was way-laid; his wife and daughter cruelly slain; and as the story runs, while in pursuit of the ruffian, suspecting a benighted traveller for the murderer, he closed in combat, and received a desperate wound; still he lives, however, and free from danger I hope."

"Say you so? I am glad to hear it! excuse my anxiety: but what are your last accounts?"

"That he was better. My information is of the best, I have it from the person who unhappily gave the blow. He is my friend, and though it was his misfortune to wound the duke, he saved his life by taking his who killed the dutchess and her daughter."

"Detested woman!" cried Agnes, "this deed was thine. Destined by her father to take the veil, Violante was placed in this infamous abode, and her immense fortune, provided she voluntarily renounced the world, was by her father's will forthcoming to the convent. But the will is defective, and all her estates revert to her uncle the instant it is discovered that her consent to enter the convent was obtained by compulsion. That uncle is the duke Aranza, you may guess the rest. Fly to him and tell him of the danger she is in!"

"That is past, I hope," interrupted Bernard. "She left this with a troubled mind. Such will be the reflections of her couch, that unless you divulge this interview, you shall find her by to-morrow an altered woman. Mention not our meeting, and abide the consequence of what I prophesy. Dare I confide in you, Agnes?"

"Indeed you may."

"I believe you. Violante! Agnes——"

"Has charms!" she replied with a smile.——

"My heart knows it. But before I proceed, let me swear to you in presence of your saint, that mine is an honorable passion. By heaven I speak true! may I solicit your friendship?"

"How if she should reject."

"Sound her, good Agnes."

"But who must I say?"

"My name is Bernard—a captain in the regiment of ———; I am not affluent, but I have enough to satisfy the economy of love. Her fortune I seek not—disinterested passion drives me on. Before I knew her rank I aspired to win her heart."

"I'll think of it; but how convey intelligence?"

"There is no difficulty in that. To-morrow evening for a week in succession, I'll be beneath the chapel window as the bell tolls for vespers. My prophetick spirit inspires me with successful love; and be thou but the harbinger of joyous news, and my inventive mind shall open for Violante a passage to the world and me!"

"The hour grows late; and I must dispatch. Seignior you forget the danger of detection. This is hallowed ground, and dreadful is the punishment that awaits your discovery. How do you purpose to quit the convent without observation?"

"I forgot that," cried Bernard.

"Pray how did you find admittance?"

This he explained, but owned his inability to pass without her assistance.

"Holy virgin!" she exclaimed, "we are lost.—Stay, there is one mode left. I'll be with you presently."

She brought with her the habit of a Franciscan friar, and having thrown it round him, bade him to follow in silence! "You'll be taken for the confessor of the convent. Speak not, I charge you; and when I leave you at the outward gate, hasten to unrobe to evade suspicion."—The plan succeeded, and Bernard returned home to meditate upon his pillow the singular adventure he had witnessed.

CHAPTER VIII.

The ensuing evening, by the appointed hour, Bernard was at his post beneath the chapel wall. Long he loitered in anxious suspense; but he looked in vain for the signal from above. The succeeding evening brought him again to the spot; but no Violante, no Agnes appeared. He was not discouraged; and once more he took his post. The bell had not yet chimed. Scarcely had he gained his station, when he perceived something white pass through the grating from within, and drop at his feet. It was a letter!—the answer to his hopes. "*Farewel!*" he exclaimed, as a signal that it was in his possession, and instantly hurried home to peruse the contents. They were as follows:

"Believe me, generous stranger, I am grateful for the compassion of the publick; but more for the sympathy you bestow upon my unhappy situation; both revive my drooping spirits, and will prove a solace in despoiling banishment. But think of me no more—forget that I exist. Your generous efforts would only aggravate the severity of confinement. Powerful influence has been used in vain to snatch me from this abhorred abode. I still cherish a faint ray of hope—and, however distant, should it prove successful, I shall be proud to acknowledge the motives which govern your kind intentions. VIOLANTE."

This cold and blasting prospect to his hope was a disappointment acutely felt by the anxious mind of Bernard—but his attention was soon drawn to other characters upon the envelope.

"And must the resolution be thus easily shaken! can Agnes, whom dear bought knowledge should have taught to shun a faithless sex, place confidence in a stranger! but the heart, long cold to social habits, dissolves with sensibility and turns to Bernard. No matter what the cause—all I ask is secresy, and I promise friendship in return—banish idle curiosity; cease to speculate upon what I am, and I pledge my services.

"Violante is attached to me, and with sufficient reason. She has confided to me your confession, and the answer she has made to your proposals: her reply is of a price with the ingenuousness of her disposition; much as she despairs of her release, she would not hazard the danger of her reputation.

"The abbess is in a more dreadful condition than you represented. The physician who attends her is well known in Saragossa as an eccentrick old fool, passionately fond of botany, and who is desirous of being esteemed a musician though without a talent for the art—Saltator is his name: could you practise upon his foibles it might gain you admittance to the convent, for I have a plan to impart which may conduce to Violante's release, and which must be conveyed to her uncle without delay. I shall know you in your disguise, and you have only to observe my motions. Bring with you, however, some tidings of the duke Aranza."

These few words of Agnes elevated his spirits to their highest tone; her meaning was sufficiently intelligible, and every dictate to his wishes vanished before his eyes. This Saltator was known to Bernard. Prone

to contradiction, and impatient of restraint, his profes-, sional skill and scientifick acquirement were lost in the labored period and inflated verbosity of the man. He had formerly lived in habits of intimacy with the officers of the regiment; but the peevish and capricious temper of a self-opiniated pedant made his society entertaining only while it was novel. It had now become less sought after; there was, however, an intimacy still preserved between one of the officers and him. This officer had some pretensions to botany, understood musick, and performed tolerably with an indifferent instrument. These acquirements might conduce to their intimacy; they certainly influenced the doctor; but the soft glances of a young french mistress who resided with Saltator was presumed to have considerable power over the son of Mars. Nor is this unlikely: the doctor having verged beyond that period of life when the blood runs hot through the veins. Bernard applied for an introduction to the house under pretence of asking professional advice.——They were received by Saltator in his study seated amid a profusion of dried plants, preserved insects, and stuffed reptiles. The room looked like an epitome of Noah's ark without its animation. Volumes piled, reluctant quarto & solid folio upon the surrounded shelves, and before him lay a solo, which he was scraping upon a violin horribly out of tune.

Having discussed the ordinary topicks of the day, criticised Milton, and Cervantes; talked of Bœrhaave, and the murrain then raging among the cattle; listened to the story of a stuffed alligator which the doctor had destroyed with his own hands at the attack of Fort Juan in South America—breakfast was at length announced.

Bernard understood the elements of chymistry: had studied medicine as a pleasure, and had looked in-

Linnæus' system of the vegetable kingdom. This he took care to hint; but dwelt particularly upon yellow fever which as in our own country had become a question of violent contention. This had the intended effect; and the doctor, in order to play off his superior information, commenced a labored history of the new cases which came within his practice. Among the number of his patients he mentioned the abbess of St. Clare, whose case he affirmed to possess all the symptoms of confirmed yellow fever; and proceeded to prove, *a priori*, the success of the mercurial treatment, describing the various changes through an application of 900 grains of mercury! Bernard affected to be no way surprised at the mode of treatment—spoke of quicksilver and *via mater* like a chymist—ridiculed the notion that yellow fever could be opposed without mercurial friction, and was astonished there could be a doubt upon the subject. He recommended publicity to the cause, and hoped the doctor would not fail to communicate to the world the history of his treatment in this particular case. "Nine hundred grains," he added, "was an unheard of quantity, and even those who practised the use of mercurials might dispute the cure unsanctioned by the testimony of the doctor himself."

"Doubt, sir," interrupted Saltator, "why, sir, let them doubt; it will only discover their inveterate prejudices. Come with me, sir, and as a rational man, sir, you shall judge of my success; and from the lips of the patient herself, sir, hear the truth of all I affirm. Cast off that coat, sir, and take this cloak and cane, sir; doctor Saltator, sir, shall confound the world; and his name in after ages shall be respected as the Galen of this."

They were introduced to the apartment of the abbess.

Wretched woman! she lay a melancholy spectacle of a misconceived disorder. Agnes was sitting by her side; and while the doctor was engaged in composing a draught for his patient, "With your permission," said she, "I'll carry your friend to see a patient who has been complaining of late."

"You may confide in the abilities of my friend," cried the doctor, recovering from the confusion which so unlooked-for an accident occasioned.

Agnes conducted him to a distant part of the convent —"my plan," said she, "succeeds to admiration. This letter you must convey to Miguel, the superior of the Franciscan monastery; he is in the confidence of the duke, and it is proper he should be informed of the indisposition of the abbess, and the management I have made to place Violante in his power. How fares the duke?—speak seignior—is Aranza out of danger yet?"

Bernard had heard nothing more of his situation since they last met; but unwilling to distress her mysterious anxiety, he answered in the affirmative.

"I am glad to hear it; but, seignior, you must visit this cloister to avoid suspicion: it contains one who owes her life to your interference. For some days had she been confined in a loathsome vault, from which it was resolved she should never come but to take the veil. Happily your successful incantation touched the flinty heart of the superior, and this morning I received permission to release the prisoner. Your prescriptions will not be difficult—recommend nutricious food—I am sure she wants it. Ill-fated Mariana! I wish I dared do as my heart would dictate——"

"Mariana!" exclaimed Bernard.

"Do you know her?" asked Agnes.

"Mariana de Cassa Calvo?"

"The same!"

"Dupes! did you say? by heaven! she must escape, and with Violante, sweet Agnes!"

"Hush! some one approaches."

'Twas Violante, come to visit the companion of her misfortune.

"Is it you, Agnes?" asked Mariana, as they entered—and Violante too!"

"Yes, daughter," replied Agnes, "and with the physician I spoke of. How is it with you?"

"Better than I could well expect," answered Mariana; "but tell me to whom I am indebted for my release? my father or the abbess——?"

"Neither!" exclaimed Bernard, unable to conceal his exultation.

Violante in a moment recognized her lover. She blushed—it was the crimson of love in early blossom. Grateful for his adventurous spirit, her young heart was touched with the compassion he evinced. Circumstanced as she was, the gradations of her sentiments toward him was by an easy and natural assent. Bernard looked at one, then at the other. This was Mariana—she whose sad story had occasioned many a sleepless night! This, Violante, the divine object whose charms had made such dreadful havock in his breast. Was it possible he had a heart thus fickle? But it was vain to conquer the stubborn passion which Violante inspired; and he pleased himself with the fancied apology that as he resolved to set Mariana free, he should thus discharge the rash vow so suddenly promised. "Yes," exclaimed he, in the fullness of distant hope, "Mariana shall accompany Violante from the convent; we'll form one family, one undivided whole! Violante, when my wife, will continue to be her friend, and I shall manifest inceasingly the eternal obligation due for bringing us ogether!"

"You have had a novel occupation to-day, sir," said Saltator, as they quitted the monastery; "but remember, sir, it goes no farther. My life depends on your discretion. Pray, sir," he continued, with a smile of exultation, "and what think you of my patient?"

"I think," replied Bernard, "that it is a most miraculous cure."

"True; yellow fever, sir," interrupted the doctor—"never was a more obstinate case. The patient is low, very low, sir; but, every thing considered, her present condition is a phenomenon in the history of medicine."

Soon after Bernard took his leave, promising an early visit to the doctor, and hastened to dispatch the letter to the monk.

Alfonso returned early the ensuing morning. What had occurred in his absence is sufficient to account for Bernard's embarrassment when he was asked to state the progress of his affair at the convent; and the letter he had sent to the monk will, in some measure, explain the agitation of Miguel after perusing the first one Alfonso gave him from the duke.

The pride of Bernard would not permit him to acknowledge the sudden transfer of his passion; nor would his attachment to Violante suffer the idea of so dangerous a rival as him who was shortly to become her guardian. Judging by his own heart, he was persuaded Alfonso could never behold Violante without feeling the influence of her charms. He saw with pain the superior claims of his friend. He was not ignorant of the effect of beauty upon the heart; and uncertain as was the issue of his pursuit, so lovely was Violante in his estimation, that he dreaded the consequences of Alfonso's first interview. In Violante his friend would behold an object whose angelick beauty he could not with-

stand; and in return she would behold the brave preserver of her uncle's life come to lead her back a bride to the world and all its enjoyments. It was too desperate a risk! but how satisfy the inquiries of Alfonso? He commenced with the dialogue in the chapel—stated the discovery he had made in the person of the abbess—of the adventure in the vault, save that part touching the suspicious murder of the duchess and her daughter. Of his subsequent visit to the convent he was perfectly silent—mentioned the indisposition of the abbess; and concluded by instructing Alfonso to hint his discovery of the abbess to Miguel, and the evidence that can be given, as adduced, of the innocence of Francisco.

By the time Alfonso returned to the monastery Miguel had already departed, and he hastened forward in the expectation of overtaking him before he should pass the suburbs of the city. In this, however, he was mistaken. The sun was so unnaturally sultry, that by the time he had about half-finished his journey, he felt himself so overcome with the oppressive heat, that he was induced to enter an adjoining coppice. A short slumber drove away fatigue; and again was he ready to pursue his route—when lo! the necromancer stood before him! A tyger, ready to spring upon him from the jungle, had not appalled him more. Was he to be thus an unceasing torment to his existence?—ever thus to haunt his steps and poison the little comfort left? A prospect had at length opened to happier days; but just as the avenue to prosperity began, an evil genius blasted every hope! "What art thou?" exclaimed Alfonso, resolved to free himself from perplexing doubts—"speak! I fear thee not."

"Presumptuous boy!" exclaimed the unknown, "put up thy weapon; I fear thee not."

"Ha! that voice," interrupted Alfonso.

"And do you remember it?" asked the stranger, in softer accents; then throwing back a cowl from his forehead, "now, Ahmed, speak——"

Twas Morad of Belgrade!

Transported at a sight so happy, Alfonso leapt into the extended arms of his long-lost friend.

The story of Morad was short but interesting. "Such evident marks of imperial authority," he began, "were the credentials of the messenger who bore you from my presence, that I dared not question the authenticity of the instrument he put into my hands. Its commands were peremptory and unequivocal; and I was forced to resign you to his charge. It was vain to refuse—I knew too well the consequences of resisting the arbitrary mandate of a turkish potentate; but though we suffered the pangs of separation, we strove to reconcile our loss under an impression that the advantage would be yours

"Scarcely were you torn from our embraces, when a party of janissaries rushed into the house, and without granting us a moment to pack up our little all, we were hurried into a boat which lay at anchor in the Danube. Ignorant of our destination, and not without alarm, we were suffered to remain in a tedious state of fearful inquietude while we descended this immense river. Having reached Ismail, we were received on board a larger vessel which transported us across the Euxine to Amasia.

"On our arrival we were allotted a very snug retreat. It consisted of a small yet convenient dwelling; to which was attached a few acres of rich land, well stored with the implements of husbandry. We had nothing to urge against the prospects before us; and,

under the idea of your happiness, we began to taste the sweets of contentment. Affluent I never was. I was born, tis true, to a considerable inheritance; but I never knew the blessing of independence. In some countries the heir derives fewer advantages from the estate than the executor of the deceased. Contested accounts, litigious law-suits, and the shameless avarice of corrupt stewardship, too frequently exhaust the legacy to enrich the dishonest confidant of unsuspecting death-bed. Such was my misfortune: my father, whose only child I was, died while I was completing an education suitable to my expectations. His ample property was made insolvent through the villany of his executor.

"I applied myself to commerce, and in time I found business flourish to my wishes. My next step was matrimony;—thanks be to our prophet for the choice I made! Long we lived happily in the society of each other, and with abundance to satisfy our unambitious views;—but, alas! we were soon to experience the instability of human affairs: fortune turned her back upon us: one unfortunate adventure succeeded another; till at length unable to withstand the number of my losses, I was forced to publish my ruin. This was a severe blow; but I had sufficient fortitude to sustain the shock. True, I was a bankrupt, but I was not dishonest. The most I suffered was the disappointment to my wife and to my creditors. Excellent woman! she felt our common hardship less than I did; and our joint industry was once more called into practice.

"About this period, an infant of only a few weeks old, were you conveyed into our house by some unknown hand. In the basket in which you lay was found an aggrette of considerable value; a small por-

trait of a female in the turkish costume, inlaid with diamonds, a purse of gold, and a letter promising an abundant supply, with assurances that we should one day reap the recompense of our friendly care. We had no children of our own; and the little innocent became our joint property and mutual happiness. We never doubted your illustrious birth, and the comfortable situation assigned us in Amasia, we regarded as our promised recompense.

"Many years," continued Morad, "had we lived in our new habitation. The product of our little farm was fully proportioned to our wants; and profusely was I tasting the blessings of uninterrupted tranquillity, when it pleased heaven to inflict its deepest wound. I lost my wife! But I hasten to the conclusion of my story. It is unnecessary as it would be distressing to my feelings to dwell upon this gloomy period of my life: suffice it to say that I fled from a scene once pleasing, but now sadly changed. I sailed once more for Europe; and after a short residence at Constantinople, I embarked for Italy, to be shipwrecked on the coast of France. Scarcely had I time to save myself before our little barque was dashed to pieces against the rocks, and I found myself on a strange shore without a friend or a solata* in the world!

"It became necessary to adopt some means of support; and if the occupation I was forced into cannot be called honorable, let it not be esteemed dishonest. Life is fraught with anxiety, folly, and interestedness. Misfortune soured my temper; and the reproaches of those from whom I sought assistance, infused principles of

* Turkish coin.

misanthropy which I could not overcome. I wished to entertain sentiments less selfish and abominable; but it was vain to contend: they became rooted, perverse, and unconquerable I had seen the folly and prejudices of my fellow-creatures, and I resolved to take advantage of the weakness of human intellect. France opened a fine field for the practice of pretended astrology, and I became a professor of occult science. Much as I had allowed for the credulity of man, it was short of what I now discovered. The copious harvest I reaped from the votaries of superstition has raised me from indigence to wealth. True it was a species of dissimulation at which, in a condition less desperate, my feelings would have revolted; but it has repaid me with something more than affluence—it has been the means of discovering my long lost Ahmed!

"That moment I scraped together a little capital. I resolved to abandon my pursuits—abstemiousness and frugality have accomplished it. A short time since on my route to Madrid, whither I was attracted by no other motive than curiosity, I stopped at Saragossa. Accidentally meeting with a traveller who had known me in France I was forced into an engagement to amuse a party in the evening. Among the company was an officer of your corps, who insisted that I should visit him the following day. I began to fear the consequences of a discovery, but for once more I promised to attend. Early in the morning, and before I had quitted my chamber, a visitor was announced. From his appearance and address I judged him to be a person of distinction. There was something unusually dignified in his manner, and his expression of countenance was beyond any thing I had ever beheld. I know not how it arose, but for the first moment of my life

was I overawed by man! he seated himself beside me, darting an eye of scrutiny which seemed to look into my inmost secrets—demanded who I was and whence I came? I now began to suspect he was attached to the holy office, and to experience in imagination all the excruciating torments of its hellish ingenuity. He remarked my agitation, and softening the severity of his voice and features, assured me there was nothing to apprehend. 'I chose this unseasonable hour,' he continued, 'because I would be private. You have yourself to thank for this visit, so blame me not: the language you employed last night was the Sclavonian—nay, startle not! what Ahmed was he of whom you spoke? whose anniversary? what important mandate forced him from your arms? confirm my hopes;—tell me where he is and I am your friend forever.'

"At first I was disconcerted at having become thus easily the dupe of my own imposture. I saw before me not merely a stranger conversant in our language, but one of whose uneasiness I had innocently been the cause. That day was the anniversary of our first meeting, and without dreaming of the possible chance of detection, you were the object of my affected incantations. There could be no danger in allaying his curiosity, while there was a chance of satisfying mine, and I resolved to relate all I knew in the hope of discovering the secret of your birth. 'Tis he!' exclaimed the stranger: 'and did no document,' he asked, 'accompany the infant to your charge by which his parents were to reclaim their son?' The aggrette which came with you in the basket was claimed by the person who carried you away; but the portrait and the letter were still in my custody. These I presented to the stranger, that he might possess in one view every par-

ticular to assist his conclusions. The moment he beheld the portrait the wild delirium of his thoughts evinced an acquaintance with the original. He clasped it to his heart—convulsive trembling seized his frame, and turning to hide the tear forced from the reluctant eye, he sighed out,

'This I should have known before.'

"I entreated an explanation; but I asked in vain. Neither of the credentials given to him would he part with; both he hurried into his bosom, and having given me his address with injunctions to wait on him, he left the room, leaving me a wondering spectator of his strange comportment! In the course of the morning I fulfilled my engagement to your brother officer, resolved for the last time to play the montebank. You know the sequel—struck with your physiognomy the moment you entered the circle, I began to recollect myself; and in spite of your assumed name, change of country, and the lapse of years, I recognised my long-lost charge. I need not, I fancy, call to your recollection the amazement I occasioned—having satisfied the company with a specimen of my magick spells I hastened to destroy the apparatus of my trade and to acquaint the stranger of the discovery I had made. Anxiously we looked for your arrival at the time I specified; day after day we looked for you in vain. At length, persuaded you apprehended some hidden treachery, I returned to Saragossa, that I might become your conductor.

"In order to remove all suspicion I sent for you to the house at which I stopt: with grief I understood you had left Saragossa. I repeated my visit, to be once more disappointed; and I began to suspect my imprudent discovery had driven you for ever from my pur-

suit. Faint as were my hope I again returned to my search, and at last I discovered you at the gate of the Franciscan monastery. It were impossible to describe my feelings when I saw you vanish into that detested abode. I knew too well its connexions with inquisitorial oppression, and I blush to own the dishonorable opinion which I harbored against you. Suspicion whispered in my ear, that you sought to betray us into the clutches of that accursed tribunal; but you will pardon the caprices of my years."

Alfonzo paused in silent meditation—revolving in his mind the past occurrences of his life, he beheld a chain of events surpassing the ordinary run of human affairs. From first to last a peculiar destiny had attended him. What he was, and what awaited him, baffled all conjecture and seemed, incident on incident, to multiply in endless succession. A minute detail of his past life he imparted to the worthy Morad. Between such friends there could be but one common sentiment; the recollection of former days came in aid of present feeling; subsequent misfortune gave to each an impressive sympathy, and kindled anew the emotions of parental blessings and filial respect."

Emerging from the coppice, they proceeded in company to the residence of Aranza; and having once ascertained whether the monk had obeyed the summons, and the precise state of the duke's condition, it was resolved that they should visit the mysterious personage, who was so likely to dissolve the impenetrable gloom which had thus long enshrouded the origin of Alfonso. Scarcely, however, had they began their march, when Miguel was descried returning from his secret mission. He reproved Alfonso for so long an absence in the critical state of the duke's health; assuring him he had been

anxiously sought after, and that his instant return to Saragossa was of the utmost importance. "I had left the invalid," added he, "much better, but we have agreed upon certain arrangements which you, my son, must carry into effect. Follow me and you shall learn the particulars." Morad would also have turned back; but he felt a wish to gratify the stranger with the particulars of Alfonso's history, and they separated after appointing the next morning to fulfil their previous engagement.

Miguel spoke much in praise of the duke—talked of the fortunate escape from the perils of the forest, and his grateful remembrance of the services of his preserver. Now was the moment for Alfonso to introduce Bernard's suspicions of the abbess. He adverted to the austere rules of St. Clare, and to the many families of distinction who immured their children in that convent in particular, while the world agreed in opinion that the abbess was rather severe in the discipline she exercised. Miguel replied, that as piety was the object of the institution he doubted whether severe discipline would assure that end. He compared a monastick life to the religious community of the Essenians of old, who looked upon it in the light of an abstemious retirement from the vicious propensities of the world. He was unwilling, he said, to agitate the question of parental authority, or to have the right of disposing of the fate of children extended. Devotion he esteemed a voluntary sentiment, and he conceived compulsion irreconcilable to the end. With respect to the character of the abbess he confessed himself an improper judge.

"I beg pardon," said Alfonso, "if I have pushed this subject to an indelicate length."

"By no means," interrupted Miguel, "your observa-

tions are not disagreeable—I regard them in the shape of ordinary remarks."

"The world," added Alfonso, "venerate the piety of the abbess, but the liberal censure the severity she has been known to treat *some* of her society."

"Some! did you say?" cried Miguel, watching the expression of Alfonso's countenance; "such conduct would be highly reprehensible."

"Her treatment of Mariana de Cassa Calvo for example," continued Alfonso, "is unpardonable."

"You astonish me," exclaimed Miguel, "she was immured in St. Clare by her father, and it would be inhuman in the abbess to augment misfortune by unkindness."

"I believe," rejoined Alfonso with incautious warmth, "I shall be borne out by those who have witnessed the fact."

"That is conclusive indeed," cried Miguel, "but let me ask, if you please, from whom you derive your information?"

Piqued at this appearance of deceit on the part of the monk, and carried away with the generous indignation which the narrative of Bernard inspired, Alfonso imprudently exclaimed, "By one who knew the abbess in a different character!"

"In a different character!" cried Miguel with unaffected surprise.

"Even so," said Alfonso; "may be you have heard the name of Westcote?"

"What of him," exclaimed Miguel, striving in vain to conceal his agitation at the mention of a well known name.

"Did you know him, father?"

"I knew him well," sighed the monk, lost in the memory of past transactions.

"She was his wife," said Alfonso.

"He was never married I believe," said Miguel, beginning to waver in the suspicions he entertained.

"I fancy," retorted Alfonso, "your predecessor knew the contrary—ill fated Francisco! but the lily will yet blossom on his tomb in despite of the perjured infamy of a wanton!'

"Explain yourself, I do beseech you," cried Miguel, grasping Alfonso's hand, frantick with portentous doubts.

"Excuse me, father. I have no proof to establish what I say; and I'm sure I have not mistaken you so far as to presume you have a design to ensnare me."

"Far from it, my son. Proceed, I conjure you, and fear no injury from me. Too much I esteem Aranza to betray the lowest menial in this house, much less Alfonso. You have mentioned names, brought back the recollection of past transactions, and thrown out conjectures that connect a chain of circumstances which must unravel my perplexing doubts."

Alfonso hesitated awhile; he feared the consequence of an imprudent development of all he knew; but he wished much to be explicit. "The little I have heard," he replied, "is from a friend—from one who assures me he recognises the once lovely madame Westcote in the abbess of St. Clare."

"Charles was never married I assure you," interrupted Miguel."

"That may be," continued Alfonso, "but by that name she went in France."

"Francisco knew mr. Westcote well!" said Miguel musing as he spoke.

"And he owes his death," exclaimed Alfonso, "to a perjured wanton—that wanton is the abbess of St. Clare,

and that abbess was the mistress if not the wife of Francisco's friend!"

"Hah!" muttered Miguel, more and more perplexed, "tell me, I charge you, how you came by this intelligence? who is this friend?"

"You'll swear to secrecy, and to save him against her malice?"

"I swear!"

Alfonso imparted all without reserve, he had heard from Bernard; and at Miguel's solicitation promised that Bernard, should wait on him at the convent. By this time they reached the Franciscan monastery, and Miguel having prepared a letter, directed Alfonso to carry it to the convent and place it in the hands of Agnes who would instruct him further.

CHAPTER IX.

Alfonso repaired to the monastery in conformity to the injunctions of Miguel. At first many objections were urged against his admission; but he was not to be intimidated. Persuasion and even threats could not deter him from his purpose. It was strange, they conceived, that he should presume to enter this sacred abode. It was profanation, and worthy of exemplary chastise-

ment, for a man thus to offer pollution to the tabernacle of the saints. They dared not listen to such a monstrous outrage against all order, decency, and religion; intreated him to reflect upon the nature of his demand, and the danger to which he exposed himself. But twas his resolve to speak with the abbess—she was at the point of death, and he had something to communicate essential to her salvation. This gave a new appearance to things—they hesitated—left him in suspense—then returned with Agnes who greeted him as the deliverer of Violante.

"Be cautious, seignior," said she as she was conducting him to the apartment of the superior, "be cautious how you proceed. You have little knowledge of the woman with whom you are to commune: that letter," added Agnes after reading it, and taking from it one to Violante, "is from the duke, who is yet ignorant that she was an accomplice in the murder of his wife and daughter. It contains a demand for his niece, in exchange for a formal renunciation of half her fortune to the convent. By judicious management Violante may yet be liberated without such a sacrifice. You will, however, tender to her the letter, and should she decline the proposal, which I can scarcely imagine, instantly charge her with the treason conspired against the house of Aranza—you may well startle, but this is not a moment for an explanation. Persist in your charge, we have sufficient testimony to adduce and confirm the fact, by stating that you slew the assassin. This done, tell her that as a friend you volunteered this visit in order to save her from destruction, and then demand an interview of Violante."

Having perused the letter from the duke, the wily abbess, spectre we should call her, for she little looked the

inhabitant of our globe, smiled, asked kindly after his health, and affected much regret that the duty she owed to god and to the convent, should have placed her in the ungracious dilemma of separating such near relatives. "Violante," she added, "has ever experienced my tenderest regard—her happiness both here, and in a world to come, has been among the chief objects of my daily avocation. We shall reflect upon the proposals of the duke—they are liberal, tis true, but we owe a duty to our saint in heaven which must not be trifled with, much as we feel disposed to consult the inclinations of degenerate man. My son, you may have access to our charge. From herself let our maternal solicitude be manifested, and we repose due confidence in the report you shall carry back to satisfy the anxious moments of the duke until you come again.—Sister Agnes will conduct you to our daughter Violante!"

"Tis just as I anticipated," whispered Agnes as they quitted the apartment, "every thing succeeds as we could wish. A few days more and Violante will be free. Would I could behold so fair a prospect for Mariana!"

"Mariana!" interrupted Alfonso—"may I hope to see Mariana?"

"You have heard her story then, my son?"

"I have; poor unfortunate! and can you too feel for Mariana?"

"Have I a heart?" replied Agnes, while a heavy sigh burst from her compassionate soul.

Violante and Mariana were together in the same apartment. To both he was introduced. Both were surprised at such an extraordinary visitor; but the moment the former understood he came from her uncle

she made a thousand inquiries after his health. Mariana had no relation who sought for her, but her heart partook of the anxiety of her friend. Vain was it to conceal the bias of her thoughts—Alfonso could trace them through all their varied changes to their highest course. Her emotions gave an additional interest to her appearance, and he began exceedingly to regret the freedom he had used in ridiculing Bernard's romantick passion. He indeed supposed his friend had forgiven him; but now it was he recollected that in their last interview the name of Mariana was not mentioned by Bernard with his accustomed enthusiasm. This impression struck Alfonso with increasing force. Surely Bernard, thought he, cannot so suddenly banish her from his heart. He had seen the object of his passion; and was the original less lovely than its image? alas! Alfonso knew not the trial he was about to sustain.—It appeared that Violante was ignorant of the misfortune that had assailed her uncle's house. But the moment she perused the letter which Alfonso brought, she saw before her the witness of the dreadful catastrophe. "This is indeed," she exclaimed as she gave the paper to Mariana, "the harbinger of affliction; but it enables me to thank the preserver of my uncle. Much, seignior, as I am affected by the loss he has sustained, the happy rescue of my kinsman from the poignard of the assassin claims from me more than language can express!"

Mariana stood awhile in speechless wonder. She gazed upon Alfonso, then rushing into the arms of Violante mingled tears of sympathy together. The transports of sensibility a little subsided, he was desired to be seated, and ranging themselves on either side entreated a history of the transaction. Now began those

emotions which were to cost him many a pang. Now the heart, touched with transports hitherto unknown, betrayed him into a labyrinth from which all his philosophy was incompetent to extricate him. He pursued the narrative; but carefully concealed the real name and character of the assassin. All were affected by the horror it occasioned—each paid her tribute of applause to the intrepid valor of the hero; but the artless innocence of Mariana, while she sought a repetition of the last scene, stole upon his bewildered senses, and thrilling with increased emotion, half intoxicated the brain. Her eyes sparkled with excessive sensibility as he portrayed the assassin, stooping over the duke, the poignard already raised to finish the eventful tragedy—but the impassioned description which Alfonso gave of the lovely countenance of the gory head excited her tenderest interest. He stood before her in all the array of godlike vision; her thoughts quitting their celestial enthralment but to recognise the soldier whose martial mein once caught her approving fancy!——snatching from his hand the hasty outline of Antonio's face which he had still preserved, she bedewed it with her tears, fancied she recognised a resemblance of Alfonso, and was in the act of impressing a kiss upon the paper, when recollecting her imprudence she blushed and gave it to the observing Agnes.

That blush did more than all beside—it was instantly reflected upon the countenance of Alfonso—each to feel and own the electrick shock. Agnes took the paper; but it was impossible to resist or mistake the silent confessions of the two—her eye was drawn from it for a moment. Soon as she had perused the features the remark of Mariana was not unnoticed; and overpowered by the exquisite throbbings of appalling

memory, she swooned away with a mahomedan exclamation upon her lips.

Imagine the confusion of Alfonso at an epithet so extraordinary! Violante and Mariana ran forward to the assistance of Agnes, but stupified by an expression, in such a place too! Alfonso stood doubting even his own doubts. Insensible of the imprudence she had betrayed, as soon as Agnes recovered her scattered senses she was proceeding to observe upon the likeness discovered by Mariana the better to conceal the real direction of her thoughts; but Alfonso was resolved to satisfy his curiosity.

"Answer me who can," cried he in the turkish language she had used, "if the god of the faithful be that of the christian?"

"O! merciful father," she exclaimed, "what art thou, that my awakened memory should thus forebode?" then addressing Violante in their own tongue, "leave us, my children, for a moment; but see that none approach.

"Art thou of turkish origin?" she asked——

"Yes.

"Asiatick or european?"

"That I know not——"

"Nor where born?"

"I know it not."

"Your father?"

"Alas! even him——"

"No parent do you know?"

"None, but good old Morad——"

"Morad of Belgrade!"

"Yes."

"O! god—o god!——tis he!—tis Ahmed—tis my son! O come to a mother's arms! and let her taste

those sweet embraces which relenting fate now offers back with such propitious omens !——

" And doth heaven at length compassionate ?" cried Alfonso, " now can I estimate the felicity of exhausted woe—the luxury of a mother's blessing—but my father was ROSALVO !"

Rosalvo was his name—how knew you that ?"

" My uncle the glorious Kyoprili——"

" O ! heavens ! my brother ! where—when—how—did you meet Kyoprili ? lives he still ?"

Briefly he ran over the transactions of the past, from his earliest recollection of Morad's cottage to the late discovery of his ancient friend. " Now, my dear mother," cried Alfonso as he finished, " now for your sad story—I long to hear some tidings of a father who, though he merits not that tender appellation has yet a claim——"

" It is a long and tedious narrative my son," she interrupted, " hereafter you shall hear every particular of my checkered life. But, while within our power, let us contrive the means of escape from this. The superior is recovering from her indisposition, contrary to the expectation of every one. Heaven knows I wish her well, that she may yet live to repent her unnumbered crimes ! but so blackened with depravity, I fear her returning health. Her polluted mind was only lately known to me, and from this abode of infamy already have I resolved to run. Your discovery rekindles a desire of life, and to-morrow's evening must see me hence, or the succeeding morn may separate us forever. Hasten to the duke—bid him instantly demand Violante's liberation—prepare to set forward to your regiment, for you must place me

in safety first. I'll give you some jewels which luckily I have by me—these you'll dispose of for our immediate use—for the future we must confide in providence; after I am beyond the reach of pursuit you can return to the duke from whose generosity you have so much to expect. Mariana I mean to take with us, so speak not of our plans, nor of the discovery we have made."

Violante and her companion entering at the moment, a period was necessarily put to further conversation, and Agnes retired to bring the jewels she spoke of; neither seemed to have been particularly struck with their abrupt dismissal by Agnes; each entered with symptoms of curiosity; but it was only to learn the nature of the communication supposed of the duke's arrangements for Violante's release. Violante was still ignorant of the capital oversight committed by her father as respected his will. Though often assured she should be supported in her refusal to take the veil, she neither knew how it was to be accomplished, nor was she capable of developing the cause of such a decided variance in the conduct pursued by the abbess as regarded Mariana and herself: to the companion of her misfortunes was offered every species of indignity; nay, brutality not unfrequently substituted for insult, and at times privation heaped upon accumulated privation, while, on the contrary, she herself was pressed to a renunciation of the world with all the soft blandishments of an ensnaring tongue. The wily abbess well knew the barrier of her success—skilled in the artifices of her profession, she taught herself to believe the only chance of enriching the convent with the united wealth of the two, was the practice of severe discipline

to the one, to the other mildness blended with unusual indulgencies: it sometimes happens, however, that the cunning will outwit its own well-poised sagacity. Few female minds could boast of fortitude superior to Mariana. Educated in the school of adversity, she had been taught in early life those lessons which were to bear her up against the day of trial. The vicious habits of her father were soon recognised. Abandoned by him whose province should have been the cultivation of a daughter's faculties, and while yet a child acquiring a taste for letters, she began to perceive an expansion of her intellectual powers at each new author she consulted. The productions of our modern press soon presented an amusing pastime: the indications of human character now no more became a subject of curious speculation: The page of history rivetted her attention; and, multiplying the sources of research, strewed before her eyes the varied flowers of endless acquirement. Of poetry, too, she became enamored; but without the melancholy madness of inspiration. Few were her associates, because few there were who had habits like her own. Inward she turned her thoughts, and without acquiring the stiff formality of pedantick rule, she enriched her understanding with literary embellishments culled from the rich fields of genius.

Different were the habits of Violante—reared in the lap of effeminate indolency, she shot up in all the luxuriance of silken foliage. Full of life, and unencumbered with aught beside an overflowing fancy, she studied the attitudes of the graces rather than the beauties of the mind. Unsuspecting in her nature she placed confidence alike in every one. Unhappiness she never knew, until the walls of St. Clare hid her

from that world she was to dazzle with her charms. Was it her fault that her education had been neglected? no, no; turn back to Bernard's description of her father, and we behold the cause. Violante was indeed a lovely girl, but beauty is the mere sentiment of the heart and can excite the tenderest emotions in spite of sober judgment: nor was Mariana less beholden to external graces; but the one shone like the medicean Venus; the other, like the enlivened marble of the impassioned statuary in the fable, gave to imagination more than symmetry to admire. Happy for both, nature had thus dispensed her bounty! Violante, with Mariana's endowments and love of solitude, had become an easy prey to the seductive snares of the wily superior. Change the position, and Mariana without fortitude had fallen a sacrifice to severe and rigorous discipline.

Left alone with these two lovely girls, the heart dilating with the raptures of a mother's tenderness—in such a place too—Alfonso felt renewed those exquisite emotions whose origin he feared to investigate. Indeed so novel were the indications of his present feelings that the lightness of his heart enslaved the judgment. Silently he gazed upon the rival charms before him. Did the eye settle for a moment on the one, there it rested till the alteration of the other fixed his contemplation. Between the two his fancy had the wildest play—The one was all perfection until he gazed upon the other. His equivocating heart run riot amid the delirium of uncertain choice; but a truant from either, the soul banquetted upon the transports of creation. Was Violante, he sighed, indeed the lovely object so soon purchased to be his ward?—and this the Mariana who, yet unseen, had fixed the distress of

Bernard?. Is he so happy?—I so blessed?—propitious heaven to throw me in Aranza's way! live, my generous friend—a double motive bids me wish it so—my gratitude and the untasted pleasure you'll derive from such a niece!

Violante little suspected Alfonso was the bosom friend of Bernard. But when he expatiated on the happiness her presence would afford the duke, and enumerating the circle of his acquaintance her society would delight, he turned to Mariana lavish in the praise of Bernard. Much as his heart revolted against the pangs endured, he could not avoid a just tribute to his friend. What! thought he, does she turn an indifferent ear to this encomium? did Bernard's confession do so little mischief as to cause no symptoms of uneasiness—no crimson hue to indicate the sensations of this sudden touchstone?

Occupied by his attention to the unchanging features of Mariana he lost the effect of those of Violante—what a secret had he discovered! Mariana heard the compliment he would bestow—but Bernard was no sharer in the reverie of her absent thoughts. They had carried her back to the day on which the regiment entered Saragossa. Again was presented to her memory the pleasing effect of Alfonso's martial appearance. Often had his figure flitted across the gloomy vault, and often had she invoked the vision to her aid. Now it was no mockery: he stood before her in form and substance—not merely what he was, but full of intrepidity and manly spirits. The pathetick eloquence of his narration—the horrid scene in which he had played so high a part—and the danger he had encountered, were so many new motives of admiration. The sensations of the two, thus apparently alike, were not simil-

those of Violante were the result of the grateful satisfaction we derive on proof that our estimation of character was not erroneous—a sentiment to subsist between the sexes where the object is capable of inspiring love, becomes the foundation of the softest passion—Mariana had no prospect, tis true, of escaping from the convent; but Alfonso's presence banished from her sight the gloomy prospect of the future, and evinced, how little obstacles are regarded when the heart is deeply interested.

"You will not forget me," said Violante, "you will not fail to recommend me to my uncle—do, seignior, hasten my release from this hated prison!"

"Ah me!" cried Mariana bursting into tears, "I have no uncle—happy, happy Violante!"

"And would you exchange this peaceful mansion for a giddy world?" interrupted Alfonso.

She paused, half doubting what she heard—"It matters not, seignior," she replied, again bursting into tears of disappointment, "perhaps I'll learn that lesson ere I die."

This keen reproach rankled at Alfonso's heart. He felt in full force the severity of his expression, and would have given much for its recal. The effects of her reproof were instantaneous upon his countenance—she doubted, however, its application: his apology was also ambiguous; but then the blush, and palpitating hand he tendered when he promised to return again, repressed her fears. The return of his mother saved both from an exposition of their mutual sentiments; and shortly after Alfonso took his leave to prepare for the arrangements for to-morrow.

It but too frequently occurs that the evil we are the most anxious to avoid should be the first object we ap-

proach. Alfonso quitted the convent in search of solitude, and he met Bernard! The blush of conscious error overspread his countenance—for the first time he wished to shun his friend! Bernard's inquiries, too, only increased his embarrassment. Unacquainted with deceit, the manly openness of his disposition had ever practised the language of Truth;—and was she in a moment become so obnoxious?—yes! stript of her proud and dignified lustre, and wrapt up in the polluted raiment of cupidity, Truth was loathsome to the eye—she looked pregnant with fatal danger to the passion but just conceived; and thus, in an unlucky moment, was defiled for ever the yet unshaken inheritance of unsullied honor! "The first truth is the easiest told," so goes the adage, and an excellent moral it conveys. Had Alfonso known the real situation of Bernard's heart—had he himself but spoken truth, he might have escaped the galling reproaches of his own heart—should have become the confidant of his friend, and saved to each the forfeit of their honor.

Bernard's interest for Mariana was now confined wholly to her liberation. The emotions inspired by the report of her charms had sustained a sudden revolution. Had she received the letter, he too evidently intended for her, in all human probability he should have become the rival of Alfonso: but his election was now made—his choice now unalterably transferred to Violante; and the rescue of the ill-fated Mariana, all of the quixotick attachment which remained. Why then did *he* not communicate the change to Alfonso?—They were both blameable; but if we are to put the conduct of both at issue, that of Bernard was the most aggravating. He had made Alfonso the confidant of his romantick passion for Mariana, and he should have con-

fided to him the sudden alteration of his affections. We have all the disposition to speculate upon the influential causes of moral action; but we wish to confine ourselves to a definite plan. It may not, however, be foreign to our views to remind the querist, who has felt the emotions of the tender passion, how slight are the grounds of jealousy. Love is a passion which courts concealment; and we should suspect the man who speaks publickly of his mistress. Such a lover may possibly prefer his suit with equal, if not greater success; but diffidence, and a desire to conceal, is more congenial with nature, and a better criterion of deeply-rooted passion. The sincere lover is an animal of curious genus:—essentially opposite to the circle of his acquaintance, because their follies, their dissipations, their haunts, and all the intercourse of social friendship, afford no relish, no mutual collision of sentiment—wrapt up within himself, his delight is the contemplation of the object of his passion; and when called upon for an opinion upon the most ordinary question, his reply is but too often foreign to the purport. His whole conduct is a confused composition; and though he discovers a degree of mechanism in all his functions, the whole man is but one heap of eccentricity. If he laughs at all, it is usually most immoderately; and you will observe the muscles suddenly relax at once into a settled melancholy. He smiles and sighs at the same moment:—excite surprise and he blushes, fearful that you have detected the direction of his thoughts, let the remark be soever foreign to the subject.

Bernard. I thought you had gone with Miguel to the duke?

Alfonso. I was going, but——

Bernard. You have been to the convent;

Alfonso. I have seen your Mariana—she is beautiful——but Violante——!

Bernard. Did you see Violante, then?

Alfonso. Yes; were you to see Violante, Bernard——

Bernard. Is she so fair? you speak impatiently, my friend.

Alfonso. You would also:—to-morrow, Bernard, and I'll introduce you. I am promised her release.

Bernard. Indeed! and you——I mean, which did you admire the most?

Alfonso. Nay, you abuse my friendship: Bernard, Violante has charms——

This was too much for the suspicious Bernard to withstand; nothing was more palpable, no testimony more decisive. Alfonso loved his Violante—he was his rival—might prove a successful one—and he hated in proportion as he once esteemed! A letter and a parcel had arrived for Alfonso in the interval of their last interview—these he produced, and retired to reflect upon the suspicions involuntarily entertained.

"TO ALFONSO.

"Unwilling to attribute treachery to a mind perhaps unstained with vice; yet impressed with suspicions so evident, it would betray not only folly but excessive rashness longer to reside within the reach of threatning destruction. A carriage attends at the door to convey me across the Pyrannees: in France I shall be safe from the pursuit of my enemies; but with arms extended and a heart disposed to listen to the calls of friendship.

"The writer of this note has important news to unfold, and such as are highly interesting to your happiness. Throw aside that criminal indifference to your

prosperity, become so manifest, by your neglecting Morad's injunctions. It is a slavish prejudice that begets fear.

"Along with this I remit you a trifling sum of money to defray the expenses of your journey. You will find me at Perpignan—hasten thither—your curiosity may be well repaid.

"Yours,

* * * * *

"How unfortunate!" exclaimed Alfonso. "This letter must be from the stranger alluded to by Morad, and to-morrow I must depart for Andalusia with my mother—It shall be so," he added after a short pause, "we'll change our route. The duke and Bernard shall continue ignorant of my plan. It will be easy to conceal the direction of our journey. This mysterious writer may have a knowledge of my mother: his intelligence must affect us equally—perchance my father calls!" The parcel next claimed his attention. It was a rouleau of one hundred and eighty doubloons! "Such a sum, too," said Alfonso, "proclaims the affluence of the stranger. It will be more than abundant for all our expenses. I must cast off suspicions unworthy of me."

He found Miguel anxiously waiting for his return. "You must to the duke, my son," said the monk. "The happy issue of your visit to the convent will be pleasing to his ear: he can now support the motion of a carriage, take one with you and hasten his removal to Saragossa. To-morrow morning we must pursue the advice of our sister Agnes.

CHAPTER X.

The returning health of the duke was indeed productive of real happiness to Alfonso. Strange as it seemed, on his arrival he found him in excellent spirits and free from danger; in the evening he had the pleasure of placing his friend in safety at the ducal palace in the city. On the road thither Alfonso hinted his desire to join his regiment, combatting the objections offered by Aranza with promises of a speedy return. "I am unwilling," said he, "to assume the uniform of a corps I have never joined. Some men might ridicule this whim; but it is a delicacy I cannot conquer. Suffer me but to draw my sword at the head of my troop, and I shall return to Saragossa proud, indeed, of the honor of my command, and the patronage of my colonel. Do not, my lord, deny me this request: it is an indulgence I must ask, and I shall set out to-morrow for Andalusia, grateful for all the kindness your bounty so highly merits."

This argument had its weight, and the duke consented under an assurance that he should return without delay. "In the future," he continued, "you must reside with me. Next to my Violante you rank in my affection. Apart from the obligation which binds you to my heart I feel an attachment to my deliverer. I am growing old and infirm; your society will cheer the decline of

years. I am not insensible of an excess of caprice too inseparable from the infirmities of old age; and I have the vanity to imagine that you'll soon learn to accommodate yourself to my foibles, and to acquire a taste for the life I mean to court without entertaining the faintest idea of dependance. I submit to the argument you have adduced; and though I regret our separation, the happiness of beholding my niece will beguile the hours of your absence. But, my son, you have not informed me whether you was pleased with Violante. Is she not a charming girl? but I'll not offend your diffidence. If you can love Violante and inspire a mutual sentiment you know my pleasure!"

Alfonso had frequently imparted a desire that the duke should be made acquainted with Bernard. This was a favorable moment to effect it; and in the course of the evening he introduced his friend This interview was not calculated to prove so desirable as the good intentions of Alfonso aimed to effect. From their recent conversation Bernard had no room to doubt Violante's impressions on Alfonso; nor were the friendly assurances of Agnes any consolation to his hope. From the hints thrown out by the duke, Violante was assuredly the destined bride of Alfonso. It was no alleviation of his fears that he had made even the first impression upon her heart: without family or fortune adequate to the expectations of Aranza, he beheld no chance of obtaining a sanction to their alliance. Still, however, in the conflict of anxiety, hope, faint as it was, sat invitingly in the perspective and he resolved to abide the issue. The love he bore Violante was too refined to excite in him the practice of dishonorable means. Insufferable as it was to endure suspense thus cruel, he was armed against the insinuations of a selfish

passion. He might influence her consent to an elopement, but there was a degree of meanness in the attempt repugnant to his thoughts. His idea of honor was peculiar and romantick:—the benevolence of his heart would have prompted his assistance to a friend in the attainment of a similar desire; but having no more than his own interest to consult, and not hurried away by a blind sympathy for another, that heart revolted at the suggestion.

The subject of conversation at the supper table chiefly regarded the convent of St. Clare. The case of Mariana, of course, became a topick of interesting speculation. Alfonso affected as little attention to what was said as was consistent to avoid suspicion. Bernard became unusually warm in animadversions upon the unprincipled conduct of the marquis, dwelt rapturously upon the beauties of his daughter's mind and person, and swore emphatically that she should not be compelled to take the veil. His peculiar warmth was not unnoticed by Alfonso. He strove in vain to suppress the pangs of jealousy, and but for the unsuspecting minds of his companions he must have betrayed the secret he most wished to conceal.

"You will be absent, Alfonso, when Mariana receives the veil?" said the duke.

"Yes—no," replied he without a knowledge of what he said.

Bernard remarked his confusion. He was ignorant that Alfonso's departure was the result of choice, and naturally enough attributed his embarrassment to the pain of parting from Violante.

"You'll lose the solemn hymn," continued the duke, "my niece is to chant on the occasion—you never heard the bewitching melody of her voice."

This was another stab to the peace of Bernard.

"My lord, I should not delay my journey," added Alfonso.

This was mysterious to Bernard.

"Poor Mariana!" interrupted the duke would to heaven I could avert her fate! Alfonso, why so serious?" then looking jocularly at Bernard, he added, "what it is to be in love!"

Alfonso blushed—Bernard sighed.

"He is indeed in love," continued the duke.

"I know it well," replied Bernard with another sigh.

"*You* know it!" said Alfonso with prying curiosity.

"Hold, my son," cried the duke, "do you blush that Violante shall be your bride?"

Alfonso smiled at the opportunity afforded him to avoid the keen eye of the other and thanked him for the honor he intended.

No longer doubting the attachment of Alfonso, who in his turn was equally persuaded of the affections of the other, Bernard suddenly exclaimed, "good night!" and hastily quitted the house.

The morning of the day which was to witness the happiness or the misery of Alfonso, succeeded a long and dreary night. Sleep had visited his pillow but to rack the imagination with horrid dreams. From the table to his bed he carried along with him the observations he had made upon the comportment of Bernard. To doubt his friend's undiminished attachment to Mariana was without the shadow of belief; and was he encompassing the baseness of robbing such a friend of such a jewel? alas! twas now too late to unlearn the written lesson of the heart. Equally as he once imagined nature had formed the persons of Violante and Mariana, soon were his eyes accused of excessive indifference, and the tender sympathy discovered by Maria-

na at the short tale he told, prepossesed him in an equal degree in favor of her mental charms.

She loved him for the dangers he had past; and he loved her that she sympathised in them.

He knew not why she could so attract; but the eye, so recently the sport of equivocating uncertainty, no longer fixed upon Violante. His was a distressing case, but there was no escape from the cruel alternative.

The hour arrived when he had promised to meet Morad. Him he found, and having satisfied his mind that the stranger, whom Morad had sought in vain, was the author of the billet he had received, he divulged the happy discovery of his mother and the plan he had resolved to adopt. This evening was the period fixed for carrying it into execution, and Morad was directed to have a carriage in waiting on the banks of the Ebro, as the convent bell tolled for vespers—they seperated for the day, and Alfonso returned to the duke for directions how he should proceed in his intended visit to the convent.

He was desired to consult with Miguel, and to be guided by his advice. To him he now repaired and having with him a second letter purporting to be the duke's he proceeded once more to the convent with a peremptory demand of Violante.

The abbess received him with an affability remarkable. Her spirits were not so good, and her health evidently worse than when he last saw her. Much as he detested the author of Mariana's unhappiness, the miserable object before him was enough to excite compassion, "I know your errand," she began, "and I am prepared to answer your demand. The duke's wishes must not be satisfied so hastily; my sudden consent would not suit the dignified character I should

hold up to publick view, and it might betray a fear of threats which my exalted situation should forbid.

At that moment his mother entered the apartment; she overheard the conclusion of the sentence, and by the signs she made Alfonso understood the necessity of adopting the plan already noticed.

"The duke," he replied, is not governed by a disposition to insult the dignity of the superior of St. Clare. He demands his ward, and Violante must be resigned." Then adding in a whisper, "Aranza has discovered the murderer of his wife and daughter. The assassin's life is in my hands; he has confessed you to be his instigator in this foul mischief, and unless you resign Violante, Diego lives to charge you with the crime—give her to me, forthwith, and he dies with the secret in my safe custody."

O god! how evident the indications of a guilty mind! back within herself she shrunk; and the exhausted constitution, supported by a feeble thread, had nearly vanished from the stage of life. But her infernal spirit had yet a scene to act before the tragedy should end: this once done the horrid character she personated would close upon the world!

"Sister Agnes," she exclaimed, "let Violante go—but REMEMBER, seignior, the condition of my consent."

"Every thing is already in preparation, my dear mother," whispered Alfonso as they left the apartment of the abbess. "When the convent bell warns the nuns to evening prayer the good old Morad will have a carriage in waiting for us. Shall we go to night positively?"

"Positively, my son," replied Agnes; "Mariana has given her consent; but I have explained to her the necessity of secrecy, and even Violante must be ignorant of our intentions. You will now conduct Violante to

the duke. I shall conceal her departure from the abbess, that when you come again at night your object may be construed for such a purpose. At 8 o'clock I shall expect you."

Violante received her deliverer with a palpitating heart; but when she heard the success of his efforts, the transports of ecstasy knew no bounds. Mariana hailed his presence with a smiling countenance; and now assured of Violante's happiness she shared in the general joy. A message from the abbess at that moment summoned Agnes from the room, and Violante followed to prepare for her immediate departure. Now was the moment of mutual confession come! Mariana, confused in this unlooked-for situation, run toward the door.

"And would you leave me?" cried Alfonso, she stopped and blushed but dared not turn.—

"Mariana—" exclaimed Alfonso.

"Seignior!" replied Mariana.

"Tis only Alfonso," he said, "come to fulfil his promise." She blushed, and smiled, and wept at once—tenderly he took her hand—it trembled as did his own; her head sunk upon her bosom—that bosom heaved as did Alfonso's—neither had a word to utter—both stood entranced.——Exquisite sensibility!——The danger of interruption prompted him to be explicit:—now she strove to disengage the hand he held—"And will Mariana leave her—?" said Alonso, the kiss imprinted upon her finger stifling the word he wished, but dared not utter. "This little privilege," he sighed, "I stole for love—can Mariana—but Mariana——" Now her eyes meet his—again she blushes—"my mother perceives the attachment of her son——".

"Your mother!" exclaims Mariana.

"Yes, Agnes!——"

"Agnes *your* MOTHER!" she adds with a smile of satisfaction, pausing, still doubting——"By heavens!" he exclaims, "she confirms my hopes!"—Now, claspt in each other's arms he impressed upon her lips the transports of his soul!

When Agnes returned she gave a dreadful description of the situation of the abbess. "I found her," she said, "in the height of terrible convulsions: the room filled by the sisterhood all paralyzed at the awful frenzy of the unhappy woman, and none offering to extend relief. A timely application of aromaticks brought back the scattered senses; and when capable of speech she desired all to leave the room but me. 'O Agnes!' she cried, 'terrible have been the conflicts of my guilty soul. O speak to me! that I may hear a human voice and know that fiends do not rack my feeble limbs;—speak, that I may know I live—one word will save me from a world of torture!'

"How keenly I pitied this guilty wretch!" continued Agnes; "her race is run; to-morrow's sun will light her to eternity! After every soothing effort to control her perturbed spirits she thus began—'Agnes, I owe you much; but the hour of retribution is arrived:—painted in horrid imagery, I have read the volume of my life—page succeeding page, from first to last, is blurred with crime; and the compiler of my infamy, as if infected with my vices, seemed to weep o'er his poluted hands. Horrible vision! never will it vanish from my sight, but by its eternal presence gnaw my repenting hours! I feel the agonies of death come fast upon me. O that the truly penitent may have a pardon! This night, Agnes, you must accompany me to the tomb of Francisco. Tis a pilgrimage I owe the manes of a godlike man;—by me he fell; by me par-

don must be sought. Kneeling o'er the ashes of Francisco, I'll confess me of my sins, and having prayed forgiveness, back to my couch I'll come and die! This night, Agnes, must witness a solemn festival. Seven was the hour Francisco saved me from an awful death; seven the hour he died, and seven be the hour I kneel upon his grave! I know the way.'

"Such," continued Agnes, "is the determination of the wretched abbess. The tomb of Francisco is in the vault of the Inquisition—from some unknown cause she holds a key to that abode of horror. I must attend her, but I shall not fail to return to you in time. Be here, Ahmed, at the hour you mentioned: Mariana, your fortitude must not forsake you; have confidence in me, and Ahmed will lead us both to happiness."

Violante was now ready to accompany Alfonso. Affecting was the parting scene: much as she sought her liberty, the idea of deserting such esteemed friends embittered the pangs of separation. She little knew how near the period of their own confinement. Agnes, sympathising in the distress she witnessed, hurried Violante from the room, and saw her pass the convent gate unnoticed.

The interview between the duke and his niece was a scene tender as the last was affecting. He had not seen Violante from a child;—that she was a lovely girl report confirmed; but he beheld her surpassing all his fancy taught. Her return to the world was like a new era in his life. He hailed it as an auspicious omen, and before an hour had passed in her society, he discovered such a flow of animal spirits as evinced the speedy termination of his convalescence.

Violante's presence he supposed might induce Al-

fonso to defer joining his regiment for awhile: but in this he found himself mistaken. It was vain to oppose his determination; and orders were given for a splendid entertainment in honor of the day.

CHAPTER XI.

The hour of Alfonso's engagement at length drew near. Affecting was the leave he took of his generous benefactor. Violante stretched forth her hand—this was not enough; in the niece he beheld his attachment to the uncle, nor did he forget it was the friend of his beloved he was addressing: he embraced her because it would be gratifying to the duke, pleasing to Mariana, pardonable by the company, and inoffensive to herself. Twas! Bernard alone felt dissatisfied by the step. To him Alfonso next presented himself:—still might their friendship have been preserved entire—still both had separated happy; but neither possessed resolution to own his secret. Both obstinate to the last they forged the fetters of their own affliction——they shook hands; twas impossible for Bernard not to perceive the agitation of Alfonso, but he ascribed it to a cause the most opposite. It was equally impossible that Alfonso should suppress his feelings, conscious as he was of the duplicity of his own conduct.

"You will return, Bernard?" cried the duke, perceiving him to follow Alfonso to the door.

"Not to-night," answered Bernard, "I am particularly engaged."——

"Where!" exclaimed Alfonso, suspicious of interruption.

" I am on duty, he replied, " farewel, my friend, may you be happy !"

The night was dark and uncomfortable. Not a star was visible: the vast canopy of heaven, wrapt up in deep obscurity, Alfonso's eye turned inward on his thoughts to hold a solemn conclave in the mind. At such a time the good man gropes his way uninfluenced by aught but personal security. The wicked, appalled by the conjurations of his guilty conscience, sees nothing but an array of hideous imagery. But Alfonso, doubly armed, had a double impulse to urge him on; his love and the rescue of a mother, felt the powerful auxiliary of his tried scimitar and the undaunted resolution of his mind. The solemn knell, warning the Franciscan monks to evening prayer, at once broke in upon the peaceful stillness of the gloom ;—anon was heard the direful import of St. Clare—wild was his fancy now :—there stood the lovely Mariana despairing of his promised aid, dragged by the unfeeling arm of papal power, and forced upon the polluted altars of religion to utter vows of abjuration blasphemous to the everlasting ! The illuminated prison of his plighted bride now opens to his left to point the way——legions of fiends,—nor all the opposing power of earth, and hell, marshalled up before him, could impede his determined soul; onward he runs, regardless of the dangers of the path, and almost sinking beneath the velocity of his speed—gains the inlet to his doubtful hope. Trembling he knocks—the door opens propitious to his desire !

" What art thou, who comes at such unseasonable hours ?" demands the porter.

" Aranza for his niece," was the reply.

" Good seignior you're welcome within St. Clare."

He had not proceeded far when he observed the ab-

bess and his mother pursuing their course, as he rightly supposed, to the tomb of Francisco. He had now too much knowledge of the abandoned profligacy of the superior, to think of leaving his mother ever on such an occasion. For a moment he forgot Mariana, and as he had thus far proceeded without observation, he determined to behold the issue of a suspicious pilgrimage.

In one hand his mother held a dark lantern, and in the other a key. The superior was supported on her arm, and both in earnest conversation. At length, traversing the dismal labyrinths of St. Clare, they reached the door communicating with the vaults of the Inquisition. These they descended; and the abbess, who appeared no stranger to the place, directed the course to take.

"That is the entrance," said she, "to the place we seek. The same key will open to us a passage——" at that moment a tremendous crash shook the immense building to its center. "Gracious powers!" cried Agnes, "what have we done." The abbess trembled; but feared to answer. "What men are these!" exclaimed Agnes retreating in dismay. "Men!" thought Alfonso, "then were my suspicions true." Forward he flew, and clasping his affrighted mother in his arms, dragged her from the vault and turned the key upon the traitor!——

"Is it you, Ahmed," cried the terrified Agnes; "what a horrid scene was that! lead me from the accursed spot, for worlds would not keep me here another hour!"—"What was it," exclaimed Alfonso.—"Saw you nothing?"——"Nothing," cried Alfonso.—"The tomb of Francisco," said Agnes, "was thrown open and the dead arose! the monk himself, clothed in the raiment of superior, stood uncovered in the gaping earth—horrid was the sight! the abbess shrieked and

plunged into the grave—it closed and both were swallowed up!—But now is the moment for our essape, let us not lose it—an opportunity that may never come again."

The explosion of the vaults was felt even in the convent; and the superstitious sisterhood, fancying the world at an end, crouded round the altar of St. Clare. Poor Mariana, less credulous, but not less the victim of appalling fear, was waiting in terrible suspense. On the countenances of Agnes and her son she read the effects of some awful catastrophe, but fearing to inquire the cause she readily consented to their united entreaties; and giving to Alfonso the few clothes provided for their flight, permitted herself to be carried from the accursed cloisters of St. Clare.

The black clouds that darkened the atmosphere were now removed, and they soon reached the spot where Morad stood provided with a carriage. Fearful of discovery they travelled all night, the whole of the next day, and part of the succeeding evening; passing through the towns of Balbastro and Campo without resting, when they fortunately reached the french lines without interruption. All danger was now past, and they agreed to halt for a night's repose.

For the first time Alfonso recollected that he had left the casket of jewels at the castle of Aranza. His mother was uneasy at this circumstance; she mentioned their value; and though the sum given to Alfonso by the mysterious stranger augured favorably as to the prospect before them, still it was essential to guard against the worst; and for fear the domesticks of the duke should purloin the prize, Morad was dispatched in order to secure it.

Twas during this journey that Alfonso for the first time became acquainted with the attachment of Ber-

nard for Violante, and his happy prospect of successful love. On this journey it was that he made his mother the confidant of his own attachment, and to hear from the lips of Mariana herself the speedy consummation of his happiness. What more could he desire?—fortune smiled upon his friend and upon himself—he had found an affectionate mother, and was soon to be the husband of Mariana!—but still was this journey destined to open a wider field of felicity to the Foundling of Belgrade. It was to give him a father and a friend! ay, such a father too, that had omnipotence itself thrown wide the book of fate and given him lawless choice such would have been the parent he would have acknowledged!

In vain he entreated his mother for the history she had promised: she was anxious to ascertain the curious import of the stranger's letter; and Alfonso, presuming her inclinations were governed by the possibility of hearing some intelligence less prejudicial to his father's credit, reluctantly forebore to press the subject for the present. Who this unknown was, baffled all conjecture; but it was evident he possessed some information interesting to the family, and both were importunate to arrive at the intelligence.

As he approached the appointed spot, the heart of Alfonso dilated with the idea that he should behold a father in the stranger. In a moment was forgotten the desertion of his youth. All recollection of the wayward fortune that had pursued him from his cradle—all the pangs of lingering suspense—all the inconsolable hours of an unfriended orphan, were lost in the name of FATHER. There is, indeed, something venerable in this word. It associates in the mind ideas which we dwell upon with peculiar delight; and the beautiful comparison of the roman emperor will endure through

ages a record worthy of his name.* A week elapsed but no stranger could he find—no tidings of Morad was received.

At length twas Kyoprili he saw! The great, and virtuous defender of ——— stood before him! he who was the saviour of Alfonso—who had made him what he was—whose affectionate regard was never to be forgotten—whose death and calumniated memory Alfonso had never ceased to mourn!——How enviable their feelings! "And have I again found my long lost ward!" cried Kyoprili;—"little did I imagine the gift of Hassan was so near a relative;—little did I imagine you were the son of my beloved but unhappy Morgiana. In me, Ahmed, behold your maternal uncle—we part no more!"

It will be remembered that the letter and the miniatures which accompanied the infant to the care of Morad were given up to Kyoprili—no wonder the bitter anguish of his soul should enforce the tear he shed! The one was the hand-writing, the other the portrait of a beloved sister. In a moment the dark mystery which enveloped the birth of his adopted, vanished from his eye. That sister was the beloved Zaide of the mighty Selim: to him she bore a son, and that son was of course, Alfonso. He knew he had escaped the general massacre at ———, and his apprehensions for his safety called forth the apostrophe uttered in the presence of Morad. As to the imperial mandate his knowledge of the odious policy of the seraglio was

* "A reverence is due to a wise parent," said the amiable Antoninus, "similar, though inferior to that which is paid by the religious to the parent of the universe."—This is the passage to which, it is presumed, the author alludes. TR.

enough to confirm his belief. In Turkey, to use the language of the historian, "the grave is ever beside the throne." He remembered his own elevated rank and attributed the intended assassination of Alfonso to the women of the palace, whose abandoned profligacy never scrupled to wade through blood in the removal of those who should impede their aspiring views. In that abject country, despotick as is the sway of the sultan, his life is never safe. The janissaries, like the prætorian band of ancient Rome, are become the disposers of the purple—less a body guard than a formidable force to depose at will the ruling prince. Now that he was removed from all apprehensions of Alfonso's safety—now that they had met once more, he was determined they never should separate. Absence had not lessened his early attachment; and the propinquity thus accidentally discovered, was but a stronger claim to his protection.

Shamefully calumniated by an ungrateful country, Kyoprili had cancelled the bond of his allegiance and submitted to voluntary banishment, rather than endure the galling servitude of splendid misery. He could have borne an injury, but his high spirit and dignified rank looked upon insult as ignominious. The equanimity of his soul made him prone to forgiveness; and though he was ever ready to exclaim with the roman orator—"to conquer resentment is more glorious than to vanquish in the field," still the vanity of human wishes was predominant in practice. We do not wholly approve the character of Kyoprili. Mild and amiable in disposition he was still human. Much as his fidelity was questioned for a while, a publick scrutiny re-established his great name with the divan; wiped away the foul aspersions and restored his fame untarnished to the archives of his country's glory. This should hav-

quietted his high sense of honor. With some it had been esteemed not merely a testimony honorable to their feelings, but flattering to their pride. But differently was the operation in the mind of Kyoprili. It was no palliation for INSULT. The very question of honor was infamy. Indignant at the affront, he secretly remitted the bulk of his princely fortune to England; and, at the period he accidentally discovered Morad was on a tour through Spain.

Alfonso in his turn communicated a circumstantial detail of what had happened to himself from the period of their separation. He described the catastrophe of the forest with a feeling heart—dwelt upon the amiable character of the duke with warmth bordering on enthusiasm; and spoke of his friendship and generous bounty, though now no longer essential to him, with an affecting sensibility. Kyoprili listened to him with a lively interest. He manifested peculiar indignity at the insult, and dastardly conduct of Mustapha. The kindness of Aranza was even magnified in his imagination; and the native excellence of his heart burst forth in acclamations of the gratitude by which it was won. But when Alfonso related the discovery of Morgiana—his beloved sister and partner of his misfortune, the transports of his joy were without bound. Rich in wealth and in the pleasing prospects of declining years, he hurried Alfonso to a realization of the dreams he fancied. This happy day was the most glorious epoch of his life. It gave him back a nephew, and restored a sister! what higher blessings could indulgent providence bestow? but heaven, still prodigal, outran the pleasing vision he had formed. They entered the apartment of Morgiana. Morad was already there—"Bernard too! and Violante—" cried Alfonso "what! in tears?"—they were the tears of gladness.

"Rosalvo!" exclaimed Kyoprili starting back.

Yes, it was Rosalvo—the duke Aranza in Morgiana's arms! Alfonso flew to Mariana for an explanation of the scene he saw, but she could barely whisper through her tears,

"BEHOLD YOUR FATHER!"

We must own our inability to do justice to a scene which had not disgraced the eye of Pericles. The pencil of Zeuxis might delineate what we have not the power to describe; such a painting the wealth of Athens indeed never could have purchased.* For our part we prefer the sublime but efficacious modesty of Timanthes of Licyon, who having exhausted all his resourses of grief in the countenances of those who lamented the intended sacrifice of Iphigenia, threw a veil over the face of Agamemnon because he knew not how to express the exquisite feelings of the father!

*This vain artist, Zeuxis, on presenting his collection to the state, affirmed it to possess more merit than the city of Athens could purchase.

CHAPTER XII.

Twas evening when Morad knocked at the castle of Aranza ;—the duke was at home ; but the suspicions of the porter were excited as much by the unseasonable hour, as the appearance of the visitor. Morad was a turk ; and though he wore the costume of Spain, still had he a peculiar harshness in his countenance which his recent pursuit rather confirmed than diminished : but he was resolute in his demand ; he said he had business of importance with the duke ; he must see him, he had no time to lose ; it was growing late, and that he had a distance to travel before the morning dawned. In vain he begged admission—in vain were threats imployed, nothing could move ; till at last the mention of Alfonso's name changed the tone of this watchful servant. The gate instantly flew open ; Morad was received and forthwith conducted to the presence of Aranza.

The duke was alone with Violante, he had seen nothing of the casket.

" Be seated, seignior," said he, " and my niece will look for it. Do you know Alfonso ?" added the duke scrutinizing the features of Morad with prying curiosity—" tis strange he should send you back without some more palpable authority. Was he so anxious for his casket ? did he fear to trust it in my house ?"

such were the questions he put. To each Morad gave an answer the least likely to alarm; but he began to feel his situation not the most enviable in the world. The duke had been described to him as a man of uncommon affability—easy of access, and rather condescending for one of his high rank in life. How reverse the picture in the eye of Morad! Violante returned; she had found the casket and would have given it to Morad.

"Hold!" cried the duke, "I must look at it, Violante—seignior forgive my curiosity, it is roused and I must inspect the contents."

Heavens! what were the emotions of Aranza! they were the property of his wife! the very jewels which she wore on the bridal day! "Violante," said he, "leave us, my child——seignior this is no time for ceremony. My mind misgives me—where is Alfonso? speak—no equivocation now."

Morad was ignorant of the deception practised by Alfonso on the duke, and he replied in the greatest simplicity that he had gone to France.

"To France!" exclaimed the duke; "he left me to join his regiment in Andalusia. Look at these jewels—did you ever see them before?"

"Never!"

"How long have you known Alfonso?"

"From a boy."

"What is he?"

"Honorable!"

"I mean his country—his family—what is he?"

"Alas! I know them not."

"Strange indeed! what art thou, then?"

"Pardon me," replied Morad, piqued at the inquisitiveness—"I am not accustomed to such questions."

"Whoe'er thou art," exclaimed the duke, "forgive my error. O seignior! did you but know half the inquietude caused by this casket, you would pity me. This necklace was my first gift to a lamented wife:—all I ask is only to ascertain how it came here: you have known Alfonso from his childhood; he must have told you how much I esteem him, and you will not be so cruel as to leave me in suspense—say I implore you—say who you are—how you should know so much yet so little of Alfonso?——"

Morad had no cause, no desire to conceal what he knew. Most willingly had he parted with all he possessed, his life not excepted, to prove his affection for Alfonso. The duke's agitation, and knowledge of the jewels too were singular enough, and though it was not probable yet he chose to imagine the possibility of ascertaining some circumstance interesting to Alfonso.

"You still hesitate!" cried the duke.

"By no means," replied Morad, "I was only collecting my scattered thoughts that I might the more easily satisfy your inquiries.——My name is Morad. I was born in Turkey——

"In Turkey!" interrupted the duke.

"Yes, in Wallachia," was the reply.

"Proceed, I pray you."

Morad retraced the story before related, concluding with Alfonso's discovery of his mother and the cause of the journey they had undertaken. The duke heard him to the end not without repeated interruption. Violante was called in—questioned as to her knowledge of Agnes, and the time elapsed since she had taken the veil. Still all was dark and mysterious: Violante knew little of Agnes, she had met her as a nun of St. Clare, and was grateful for the uniform attentions she had shown—more Vio-

lante knew not; Morad could explain no farther;—Bernard was sent for; he recollected the agitation of Agnes in the vaults of St. Clare when the duke's life was threatened. Aranza hoped, yet doubted; he paused, he reflected: he thought it possible his beloved wife might have survived the criminal rashness of a suspicious mind; long since had he doubted the fatal impressions of a jealous moment. Years of unavailing sorrow promised to poison the felicity of future existence. Fortunately he found a solace in a second marriage: that also in the end proved unhappy, and the only temporal tranquility he looked for was in the society of his niece and the husband he had selected. Morad's story carried him back to former days. This Agnes might be Zaide, (the Morgiana of Georgia) the first inspirer of a tender passion. He resolved to follow her, and the journey gave her back to his enamored heart! The passion of Rosalvo was not gone, it was only smothered to break forth with renewed violence in the breast of the now duke Aranza. Morgiana's happiness was complete in the treble blessing of a brother, a husband, and a son—Kyoprili's in a sister, in a nephew—in his earliest friend! the loves of Bernard and Alfonso no longer opposed, their friendship was doubly cemented in the friendship of their respective wives!

CHAPTER XIII.

Let us now follow the abbess to the vaults of the Inquisition.

The insinuations of Alfonso filled the mind of Miguel with indescribable amazement. He recollected the circumstance of the abbess receiving the veil, and well she knew she was indebted to Francisco for her elevation. He was convinced more and more she never could have been the wife of Charles—that she had once been married was a current report; but then her husband was a frenchman, and the name, though forgotten, he was sure was not Westcote. Nine years had elasped since Charles quitted Saragossa. Frequent had been his visits to the monastery, and it had often occurred to him that his intimacy with Francisco was irreconcilable to the habits of the superior; but the high respect he entertained for the character of Francisco never suffered him to pry into the secrets of their private interviews. Alfonso's communication, however, roused every latent spark of curiosity; and the mysterious friendship hitherto overlooked with indifference, indeed almost forgotten, once more presented itself with a thousand perplexing doubts. He sent for Bernard, whose relation served to redouble his curiosity, and he resolved to pursue every means to satisfy his anxious mind.

The transactions of the Holy Office are ever secret;

its means of information unbounded; and its spies every where. Such is the terror which the very name inspires, that the sacred bonds of friendship have dissolved, and society warred against itself; fathers have have become informers against their children; children against their fathers; husbands against their wives; wives against their husbands—to screen themselves from the menace of destruction. All ranks are subject to arraignment by this iniquitous tribunal. Yet so enveloped in mystery are the proceedings, that not a syllable escapes beyond the walls of the Inquisition! the abbot of the Franciscan monastery is a judge *ex officio*: Miguel, of course, had a seat at the holy board as Francisco had before. Like him he filled the office with sentiments honorable to humanity. His desire was to watch over the safety of suffering innocence, rather than to augment the number, or to increase the misery of those whose unhappy destiny placed them within the pale of intolerant persecution.* Miguel had some faint recollection of an interesting trial which he had seen among the records of the Inquisition. It occurred to him that it might have been about this time—It was possible that trial might throw some light upon the subject, and he resolved to refer to it without delay. From the records of the office he collected a few of the particulars mentioned in a former part of this work.† Thus he became acquainted, as he supposed that the abbess was no other than madame

* Power usually hardens the heart and makes the obdurate more callous; but the memoirs of Charles Westcote evince traits of Francisco and Miguel well worthy of attention.

† *Vide* Note, page 109 & 110.

B.——But how was it possible, he asked himself, that one who could feel so tenderly the loss of a beloved husband as to seek refuge in a convent should become the most abandoned of her sex? The amiable qualities of Francisco's heart came home to Miguel in every line he read: and the sigh of pity for his misfortunes mingled with enthusiastick admiration of a character so illustrious. The trial was one of the many in which Francisco had boldly stood forth the champion on the side of innocence; but it was to that one in particular his attention was directed—time and circumstance so combined with the story of Bernard that he was persuaded the whole mystery rested upon its solution. He debated in his mind its various events, strove to reconcile the singular contradictions of madame B——'s character; compared the virtuous conduct of her early life, with the abundant proof of subsequent profligacy; again and again he dwelt upon the novel change, till at length he persuaded himself that he beheld in the character of the abbess less of madame B.——than of the perjured wretch who died in the dungeons of the Inquisition!

This thought of Miguel's was happy—it was, indeed, a just conception; nor do we think it extraordinary that the idea should have occurred to him. In a moment he resolved to inspect the vault, in which it was stated the accuser was interred! Impatiently he waited the arrival of Bernard for whom he had engaged to call that evening on which Alfonso departed for Perpignan: it will be remembered that Alfonso and Bernard both quitted the castle of Aranza at the same moment: the one for the convent of St. Clare; the other to his assignation with the monk. Without imparting the nature of his design, Miguel desired Bernard to follow him,

carrying him through the intricate passages of the monastery to the cemetry of the Inquisition,* and began to open the grave with the implements he had provided for the purpose. Bernard, appalled by the gloomy horror of the place, had begun to suspect the monk of treachery; but now persuaded that he was opening some subterraneous cave which was to shut him up alive, seized Miguel by the throat, and threatened him with instant annihilation, if he hesitated one moment to conduct him back. Alarmed by the unexpected shock, Miguel at first suspected they were discovered by the officials of the Holy Office; but so soon as he knew the cause he smiled; equally at his own terror, and the suspicions of Bernard, who became ashamed of his mistrust under the reproving ridicule of his companion.

"What have you to fear," he asked, "from one of my age? do these habiliments kindle up alarm; or does the sullen gloom of the surrounding scenery inspire you with an idea that I could injure you? no, no, seignior, be yourself again—lend me your aid in looking into the contents of this grave, and I pledge myself to explain every thing to your satisfaction when we return to the monastery!"

In a little time they dug sufficiently deep to reach the coffin: thus far Miguel had no doubt of the interment of madame Parouty; but resolved to pursue his investigations, he began to unscrew the lid. Time, and the moisture of the earth, had so corroded the nails that considerable difficulty attended the completion of the work: at length the last screw yielding to his arm, the

*In the memoirs of Charles Westcote, the Franciscan monastery and the convent of St. Clare are stated to communicate with the Inquisition.

coffin burst asunder with a tremendous explosion! at that moment the abbess and Agnes entered the cemetry from the convent of St. Clare. Their object was to visit the tomb of Francisco. The half suffocated Miguel stood in the gaping earth waiting for Bernard to assist him out—no wonder the abbess shrieked! she fancied she beheld the shade of Francisco come forth to charge her with his innocence—forward she flies as nimbly as her enfeebled frame would permit, and plunging into that grave, too long duped of its profligate tenant, yielded up her repentant soul to god! paralized at a scene thus seemingly supernatural, Miguel fled precipitately, followed by Bernard, the wondering partner of his adventure!

We have already mentioned from the memoirs of Charles Westcote, that Francisco planned the release of madame B——from the convent of St. Clare, by substituting madame Parouty in her place. He well knew the men with whom he had to deal; and in order to strike terror into the minds of his superstitious coadjutors, should they be led to doubt the story of her death, he had secretly filled the coffin with combustible matter, secure of covering his deception by enforcing a belief of supernatural agency.

We could wish to have avoided the mention of Religion. It is a tender subject and seldom productive of much good. But the varying tenets of the family we have introduced will be remembered by some: and anxious that the general happings in which we closed the volume shall be complete, we hasten to anticipate all objections to these alliances between turks and christians. To avow a friendly disposition to religious toleration cannot surely be objected to.

A system of universal benevolence begins to dawn

assuredly to shake the venerable foundation of written precept. The narrow and illiberal principles of a selfish morality fast moulders into decay, and the conceited sectary falls rapidly into disrepute. The cloud, so long obscuring the amiable maxims of the primitive christian, vanishes apace;—superstition dies away; men cease from entrusting their salvation to the profligacy of interested priests, and under the august reign of Philosophy one catholick church rises amid the ruins of intolerant zeal, to which all flock, all prostrate themselves before one almighty being! how melancholy the picture of slaughter and desolation which ages past have exhibited under the seductive appellation of holy warfare! with what soothing pleasure must the truly good hail the period when the sword, cleansed from the blood of millions, returns back into the scabbard! the period when unawed by sanguinary proscription, all descriptions of men shall unite in the cultivation of the arts of peace? the revolutions of the past present to the eye lessons grand and instructive; but the feeling mind shrinks back with horror from the scenes described in the annals of intolerancy. Execrable as was the character of Nero, it was humane to that of the ninth Charles of France; nor were the united cruelties of the twelve Cæsars such a stain upon humanity as the sanguinary edict of Nantz.——"That his successor would be a serpent to Rome, and a Phæton to the rest of the world," was the prediction of Tiberius. But the reign of Caligula was mild to that of Philip the IId of Spain, and the imperial prophecy outdone in the papal enormities of Leo the Xth.*

* Leo the Xth was the founder of the Inquisition—Philip the IId established it in Spain.

The sacking of Jerusalem was mercy to the crusades; and the roman eagle was less terrible than the banners of Christ and Mahomet. Alas! how painful the recollection of such scenes! how delightful the contemplation of universal suffrage! and with what enthusiasm the philanthropist must hail the time when persecution shall be no more! every nation has had its period of barbarism, of civilization, of luxury and decay; such are the ages of political society. In ages past the whole climax portrayed but one tissue of crimes; nor were the unbridled passions of the savage more vindictive than have been the *arrets* of kings! but under the influence of the example of the past, and a milder and less indefinite system of philosophy, a revolution in the moral sentiments of man has grown out of the revolution of kingdoms. America has set a glorious example; she was oppressed, and she resolved to be free—she fought and was successful! entrenched within the liberty she bled so freely to acquire, she sheds around her the sweets of its divine influence; her arms are thrown open to all descriptions of men, and within her bosom the pagan, the jew, the christian, and the turk, securely nestle—placing unbounded confidence in one universal providence, and uniting in defence of their common country.

We agree with a contemporary writer that, "the happiest style of novel writing is not to make us acquainted with the hero by a relation of all the minute incidents of his life; but to favor us with his soliloquies and reflections upon men and manners." We have seen Alfonso's reflections upon the character of Kyoprili; but at the period he knew him, his mind was not sufficiently mature to form that estimate upon which we have a desire to enlarge. Similar were their early lives—the one was voluntarily sacrificed to an execra-

ble policy of his country—the other abandoned in infancy in consequence of the most unhappy of all human passions. Both were born christians; but unluckily (to the popular prejudice of the country in which they now meet again) neither enjoyed the advantage of a christian education. This might have been regarded as an insurmountable difficulty against a residence in Spain; but it was a maxim of the one, and it had taken root in the heart of the other, that a plurality of wives might suit the sensuality of a mussulman and be obnoxious to the habits of a christian; even the religion of the former, like that of the latter, is unhappily disturbed by the innovations and dis-union of sectaries. Morad was a hakimite, and of consequence, a believer in the doctrine of transmigration. Alfonso naturally imbibed this *truth*, and often as a boy had sent up a pious petition to his prophet, that of all animals his soul might be spared from the carcase of a christian. Somewhat different was the lesson taught to Kyoprili when sold a slave. Destined to shine in camps, and to conduct the armies of the faithful, he was reared in the persuasion of the carmite, who indulges in the juices of the grape, and who even hopes to have a place in elysium without the trouble of a previous pilgrimage to Mecca. Reader! before you pass consent on these absurd notions, look at home for conceits of an equally fanciful adoption. We are contending for religious toleration; and surely in a matter of such moment, in a subject which strikes at the nicest interests of the heart, it is essential that individual man should enjoy the consolation of paying homage to his god, after the manner of his own fancy. It is maintained that a pilgrimage is of no importance; yet, nugatory and unavailing as it should seem, it is esteemed by the hakimite essential to his salvation.

operating as a charm equally powerful as the purgation so much relied upon by the romanist, the rosary of the dominican, the athenesian attribute of the divine essence, or the symbolick solution of the last supper, of such opposite explanation. The organick arrangement of the human frame denotes the intentions of the creator; and to despise the faculties he has bestowed would betray a dereliction from the path of reason, if not transgressions wilfully criminal. Had he chosen to endow us with *innate* sentiments of right and wrong, the errors of our judgment might be corrected; our prejudices reconciled, and the endless difference of opinion compressed within one narrow boundary. But for purposes equally compatible with unerring wisdom and inscrutable to human intellect, such a development was forbidden. All the multifarious modes of worship and the heterogeneous notions, which his creatures were to manifest of his attributes, OMNISCIENCE must have foreseen; but we must not thence infer, that the calamities which have visited the earth in the shape of pestilence and horrid warfare, are demonstrations of divine disapprobation of peculiar modes of worship. To assent to such base conclusions would at once evince an abandonment of the reason we affirm to be given to us as sufficient for all the emergencies of life, and would kindle an irreconcilable objection to the benevolent attributes of an all wise-creator.

"He repaid man in his own coin," was the reply of the good Fontenelle to the remark, "that god made man after his own image." For our own part we profess similar sentiments to Kyoprili, and we presume neither to liken ourselves to the image of OMNIPOTENCE, nor to ascribe human passions to INFINITE WISDOM. We arrogate to ourselves no superior under-

standing—we pretend to nothing beyond the limits of that capacity which experience has taught. We coincide in opinion with Kyoprili, "that the globe we inhabit is but a slender portion of that immeasurable space which completes the dominion of an almighty monarch. As creatures of one planet we have organs adapted to our necessities. The inhabitants of the other planets have organs essential to their peculiar information and their peculiar wants. Each planet has its own circumscribed sphere of action, each its own inhabitants; and as the first varies in its physical situation, of consequence the physical of the other must also vary. Yet presumptuous man, the vain rational of this globe, because he feels a superior intellect to the animal of the forest, presumes to liken himself to the image of the creator of infinite worlds!"

The ideas Kyoprili entertained of religion was conformable to the opinions of most philosophers: an impressive sense of the irresistible influence of a superior being over human concerns which may become beneficial or inimical to our welfare. Under this persuasion he could imagine the most opposite principles; allow zeal and enthusiasm to them all; and account for the bigotry and superstition which would result from a desire to conciliate the supposed powers which men reverse; account for the basest and most amiable affections; and expect the most abject, or most elevated characters, according as their ideas formed of that power, operated on the human mind. Fatalism is a part of the carmilite's creed; and as Kyoprili ascribed the propensities of man to his nature, regarded that doctrine as far from an encouragement to crime. He limited the faculties of men to the sphere of physical existence, because he beheld with lively emotion the best affections, of which our nature is capable, originate in self-love.

This text he borrowed from the works of Helvetius, and his own intercourse with the world was the best commentary. The powers of the imagination he considered as less the bounty of nature, than the result of acquired habits—Their dependance was upon external scenery, and the objects which every day presented in the progress of military education was not lost to his ardent mind. Robust in constitution and trained to the gymnastick exercises of Georgia, the powers of his mind were sharpened in early infancy. The religion of his forefathers accompanied him into servitude; but boy as he was, when led captive to Constantinople, his catechism was imprinted on the heart like the schoolboy's task, acquired by memorial effort, not engraven by the efficacy of conviction No longer accustomed to the precepts of christianity the early acrimony implanted against the followers of Mahomet soon began to lose its force; and as we are seldom afflicted with the passions of shame and remorse for actions we see approved and practised by the world, his young mind imperceptibly inclined to the precepts of the koran. One impression, however, was soon made which had a powerful influence on his understanding, and inspired that fondness of religious liberty which marked his disposition ever after. He recollected the bitterness of parental sarcasm against the faithful; and he soon discovered that the rancor of his new comrades was more envenomed, if possible, against the christians. His father was a christian! he himself had turned mahomedan: and—

WAS HE TO DENOUNCE THE AUTHOR OF HIS BEING?

This simple thought was productive of more lasting

benefit than volumes of morality. It seized instantaneous possession of his mind—at first he wished his father were a mussulman to enjoy the alluring charms of elysium; but he remembered the christian had an happy hereafter of his own—and are there TWO HEREAFTERS? he asked himself. This was his next perplexity:—long he doubted—much he wished to know! at length, as the faculties of the mind unfolded, he beheld the universal super-structure as the beneficent creation of one common parent.

Martial ambition was a passion which soon stole upon his fancy; nor was the genius he displayed suffered to pass unnoticed. This preferment justified the good opinion of his tutors; and when he joined his corps it was not long ere his theoretick knowledge was called into practice. Personal fear was lost in the visions of his ambition: even prudent caution he confounded with cowardice. Intrepidity, bordering upon rashness, was his fault. The laurels he stript from the enemy was nothing in his vain opinion when compared to the applause of an approving general. The name of Kyopri-li echoed from right to left; all had witnessed the gallant intrepidity with which he charged to turn the fortune of the day. Victory in place of ignominious defeat unexpectedly shone abroad; and since the exploit operated to the prejudice of none, none were stung with envy. Thus it was not long ere he established his military fame: the foundation was secure, and his rise not gradual but rapid. He was yet in the bloom of youth when he gave peace to his country, and the fatigues of campaign gave way to the renewal of the idle habits of his profession. Now was the period when his active mind, disgusted with habitual *ennui*, began to enter the fields of general science. The political revo

lutions which have agitated civil society were traced with unwearied attention. The character of the various potentates, generals, statesmen, and rulers of faction, with the motives which seemed to govern their several conducts, he studied with care. He reviewed the progress of science, the rise and fall of states, the origin of society;—he compared the ancient with the modern, and their various attributes of the divinity. These taught lessons of instruction, which contributed to fix the bias of his character: from all, a principle of universal philanthropy was inculcated superior to all precept. From the schools of ancient philosophy was collected the various ideas which appeared conformable to the fitness of things; and those adopted whose maxims were applicable to the practice of life and to the ordinary intercourses of society. The polygamy of his country admitted the sensual indulgencies of the epicurean philosophy; but his voluptuousness was more of the mind than of the body. Like Epicurus (we had almost said Aristippus) he admitted the identity of pleasure and virtue; but he was little inclined to wander from his principles. Nothing delighted whose indulgence was injurious to another. He pursued pleasure, but he sought her in the avenues of virtue. His voluptuous character received its efficacy from an idea that it was essential to mental improvement, to the refinement of sentiment, and to the polish of a courtier. Ambitious he certainly was; but if he ever consulted expediency rather than justice in the attainment of his desires, it was not according to the selfish views of Themistocles, but from motives of genuine patriotism. A nice sense of honor made him highly susceptible of disgrace; and though he was ever the active apologist of others, he was himself seldom guilty of excess. Often would he aim at the practice of those various lessons which have

been promulgated to instruct mankind in happiness; but it was only to be convinced how much the instructor was hurried away by his own particular sensations, and how little he had consulted the passions of his disciples. To escape listlessness he would sometimes throw himself in the path of dissipation; but though he found it contributary to relief, the charm was of momentary duration. He would try solitude; but it also had its enjoyments and its privations. ADDIO CARISSIMO, was the maxim which uniformly influenced his pursuits, and whose truth experience confirmed.

The idea of futurity seldom interrupted his repose. Highly interesting as mankind esteem the question of hereafter, it only created a solemn pause in the speculations of Kyoprili. He acknowledged one supreme being, infinite, and omnipresent, self-existent and unchangeable—in whose bounty he had faith, in whose unerring wisdom he placed unbounded confidence! To all the world he admitted the privilege of electing a mode of worship peculiar to individual notions of the creator; all he sought was a like privilege to himself. His acceptation of character was not measured by the piety of the man: he esteemed according to the impulse of his own feelings. He took the world as he found it, and sought to pass through life in the tranquil enjoyment of its blessings. Such he fancied to be the ordinance of nature—such the lesson he taught Alfonso, and both were ready to pass into the grave resigned to the judgment of their GOD.

FINIS.

MAY 3 - 1932